

AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

DECEMBER 14, 1940

WHO'S WHO

WILLIAM G. RYAN voices his own personal conclusions about his local branch of the William Allen White Committee. This Committee is so utterly respectable that even a breath of criticism against it, we fear, will make all of us suspect. It is, frankly, an organization that does not care when this country gets into the war, provided we get into it as soon as possible. We should warn our readers that lack of sympathy with the White Committee maneuverings is not synonymous with a lack of sympathy for Great Britain. . . . **FIRST WARD COUNCILMAN**, during the past few months, has been making some slam-bang observations on the state of politics in cozy little towns. He draws his facts from his own locale, but that is typically American. A question arises: are his experiences and observations applicable in your typically American bit of a hamlet? . . . **IMELDA C. RAUSCH** identifies herself adequately well in her article. Her humble complaint is worthy of the consideration of the clergy. It is well to recall that most of the laity is spiritual-minded. . . . **JOHN P. DELANEY, S.J.**, has been so busy organizing the Institute of Social Order that he has not written much of late. But the urge of a great idea swooped down upon him, and he burst forth into a cadenced ode. We recommend it for public reading. . . . **BERNARD H. FITZPATRICK** is a New York lawyer who has been engaged in labor litigation and the application of the Wagner Act. His argument for labor freedom is somewhat original and slightly irregular. . . . **EUGENE H. MURRAY** is a new contributor. Having visited the Guiney Memorial Room at Holy Cross college, he took new interest in the Guiney essays.

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COMMENT

CONCERN over the moral and religious welfare of the men inducted in the increased army and navy services is becoming critical. Plans for such welfare work should have been drawn up before the Selective Service Act was put in execution. Preparations looking to the moral and religious safeguards of the volunteers and draftees in the large military reservations should have been completed before the men reached the camps. It appears that this most important phase of the new life of the new soldiers was overlooked, or purposefully neglected, by the Government agencies and the army officials. More and more stories are in circulation about the moral conditions surrounding some of the concentrations. More and more complaints are being made about the failure to provide facilities for religious services in the camps. But now, a new cause for concern is arising. The National Youth Administration, under Aubrey Williams, is reaching out to control the morals and the morale of the soldiers in these military reservations. The record of Mr. Williams on the matter of religion in the N.Y.A. is not very encouraging. Should the whole responsibility for maintaining the spiritual life of the men in the camps devolve on this or any other governmental agency, we fear that the spiritual mortality may be appalling.

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COMPLAINT is rightfully being made by the recognized welfare agencies who have been eager to cooperate with the Government and the army in taking care of the men in the camps. The Knights of Columbus, the Y.M.C.A., the Jewish Welfare Board, the Salvation Army and similar organizations were expecting to resume the services they conducted during the World War. They could obtain no authentic information about their possible activities from any responsible Government executive. They have now formed into a coordinating organization known as the National United Welfare Committee for Defense. All efforts to get an authoritative response from governmental and military agencies having failed, the combined Committee appealed to President Roosevelt in a telegram dated November 23. No answer has yet been given. And so the civilian organizations, that could now be operating for the spiritual good of the new recruits, are idle, just waiting, unable to formulate plans. The only certain information that they have is discouraging: they will not be allowed to serve on the military reservations. They may, however, be permitted to establish centers in the towns and cities adjoining the camps. The religious and the moral welfare of the young soldiers is a grievous responsibility. It should be borne partially by the civilian agencies that have been created for that specialized function.

A LETTER just received from a Catholic chaplain in one of the large camps is illustrative of conditions everywhere. He states that the Government is spending millions of dollars for Reception Centers and Replacement Centers in the camps. "Every detail and every possible activity of the raw recruit will be provided for," he states, "with one glaring exception, namely, no provision for a decent and suitable place for the holding of religious services." The chaplain inquired from the commanding officer what provisions were to be made, for religious services, in the new locations, expected to accommodate more than 15,000 new troops. He was told that "none were made, and that it would be useless to go to the War Department about it." He was given to understand that "services could be held in the recreational halls, after the custom which prevails in the CCC." This calls to mind another letter recently received from a former CCC chaplain. He writes:

One of the leading attributing factors for the spirit of indifference in matters of religion evident in the CCC Camps was the absence of a decent and suitable place set aside for the conducting of religious services. I have said Mass in the Camps in the mess hall, in the recreational halls, using the pool table for an altar; I have even piled boxes to a height suitable for the celebration of Mass. In a real emergency, the Catholic priest can say Mass anywhere, even on the tailboard of a truck. But, when a program is being drawn up and millions of dollars are spent freely, and sometimes foolishly, on that program, it is my opinion that the powers-that-be ought to make some provision for the respectable conducting of religious services. In their program for the training of thousands of young men who are about to enter these camps, no thought is given to their religious instruction.

Having adduced that testimony, we return to the army chaplain's letter, which concludes: "Will the Government ever learn that, without religion, all this preparedness is hooey, and that without the proper and adequate facilities for religion, the men will have little or nothing of religion?"

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FEW Catholics will be astonished at the Pope's permission to celebrate Christmas Mass on Christmas eve, for Mass during the afternoon or early evening is not a new idea, but a very old one. Only three or four years ago, at Lourdes, during the great anniversary ceremonies, the Pope's representative sang a Mass beginning at sundown. In Shakespeare's romance, Juliet promises to see Friar Laurence "after evening Mass." And for centuries the Church has been offering Easter Sunday's first Mass on Holy Saturday morning—some twelve or fifteen hours ahead of time. This year's pre-blackout Masses in Europe are, to be sure, an extraordinary privilege, but the thing that will really amaze all Catholics is the change they bring to the Eucharis-

tic fast. We know of no other instance in recent times in which this law has been mitigated for all. Even for the Lourdes Mass mentioned above, the celebrant was expressly obliged to fast from the preceding midnight—that is, for eighteen hours. And yet all who communicate during this year's Evening Mass (as well as the priest who celebrates) are bound only to a four-hour fast. This will bring about some highly interesting observances. In Rome, for instance, where the blackout comes at 6 P.M., the Masses will start probably about 4:30, and thus the Faithful will be able to finish the mid-day meal before beginning their Communion fast. In Switzerland (blackout at 10, Introit around 8:30), they may lunch late or dine early, with the fast starting at 4:30.

OFFICIALS of the Treasury, the State Department and the Maritime Commission confer in Washington on the question of financial credits to Great Britain. Their decisions, if any, are not yet made public. In the meanwhile we await these decisions with ever-growing anxiety. The British claim they are rapidly approaching the financial danger point, that their negotiable securities and dollar balances here cannot last beyond the middle of next year. On the other hand, the mere repeal of the Johnson Act and the credit provisions of the Neutrality Act are not enough to satisfy their needs. Practically, it is a question of Government credit to Great Britain, with no sufficient collateral to secure it. The time is growing shorter, the need more and more acute. And, closer and closer we approach to war. The avowed purpose of our Government is at all costs to keep out of the European war. As this crucial decision concerning credits looms up, there is need of the utmost and indispensable clarity concerning each of the following two points. First, what financial profit schemes, if any, are harbored by individuals here or in Great Britain in connection with the proposed credit transactions? Secondly, what, after all, is the *entire* picture as conceived in the minds of those who ask for the aid and those who are deliberating about extending it? What is the goal, the terminus of it all? Until these two questions are answered with absolute openness and convincing clarity, no intelligent decision can be reached upon credits to Britain.

THE number of people who "are not and never were" Communists is increasing immeasurably. Many additions are being currently counted in Brooklyn, where the Coudert Legislative Committee is investigating subversive activities in the New York Public School System. The city-supported Brooklyn College was, a short two years ago, alleged to be held in the Stalinized grip of the Communists. No one doubted the power of the Marxist minority, and few dared to speak openly in opposition. But now, those who ran the College are scampering away before the Committee. This is but one more indication that Communism is losing its grip on public activities in the United States. But it is

not proof that Marxism and the atheism it engenders is going into a decline. The basic Bolshevik doctrines are still held and taught by college professors, though in disguised expression. After extracting the squeal of "we are not and never were" from the ex-comrades, the Coudert Committee and other investigating agencies should study the subversive minds of those educators who are not Stalinists and yet are Marxists. It is not party-membership that alone counts. It is party-mentality that most subverts our American institutions.

FOR the present, Mexico is becoming a model good-neighbor. The closing period of the regime of President Cárdenas and the inauguration period of the term of President Camacho were buoyant with confessions of faith and protestations of reform. Undoubtedly, heavy pressure was exerted by the United States to bring about such accord. But such pressure did not formerly bring such acquiescence on the part of the Mexican junta. Due credit must be given, in evaluating the Mexican friendship with the United States, to the campaign of the presidential contender, General Almazan. The Almazanistas were in a majority on the presidential election-day, and were in political and economic revolt against the Fascist-Communist clique that controlled the country. This resentment was so deep that the Cárdenas-Camacho regimes were forced to a policy of conciliation and appeasement. The Almazanistas thus attained a measure of their objectives and are, apparently, returned to Mexico and ready to accept the presidency of Camacho. In line with the general policy of appeasement, President Camacho, in late October, made the startling announcement: "I am a believer." This statement, at the time, was wrongly interpreted as a declaration that General Camacho was a professing Catholic. However, on December 4, Archbishop Martinez, of Mexico City, stated: "I consider General Avila Camacho's declaration sincere." His Excellency, furthermore, appealed for cooperation with the new President, and expressed his own beliefs:

I feel certain that freedom of conscience and religious peace, which made great progress in the Cárdenas Administration, will not only continue in the new Presidential period, but also will be consolidated and perfected. I believe this, not only because the atmosphere is favorable for such a development, but also because General Avila Camacho has clearly expressed his wish to satisfy all just aspiration of public opinion, particularly in matters related to religious freedom.

There may be dawning a new era of spiritual peace and social freedom in Red-ridden Mexico. Indications, certainly, point to a decline in Communist power. But the Camacho Administration must progress quickly and effectively in cleaning out the Marxist poison in the whole educational system, and must recognize, as Archbishop Martinez stated, "that the Mexican people have certain spiritual needs that can be satisfied only by religious freedom." It is the prayer of every American Catholic that there may be peace and freedom, at long last, in Mexico.

MR. WHITE'S COMMITTEE OPENS A LOCAL BRANCH

WILLIAM C. RYAN

SOME time ago, William Allen White arrived in our town, not in the flesh, but in spirit. The spirit is housed in a first floor front on a respectable street, served by a sizable stenographical staff, and kept in order by a volunteer shock brigade of corpulent gentlemen well beyond the war age. Its presence is made known to the public by means of an American flag so large that nothing else can be fitted into the display window except brief quotations from Abraham Lincoln and Adolph Hitler, which, so far as I can see, provide only contrast in literary style and the seemingly superfluous intelligence that the railsplitter from Illinois and the housepainter from Austria had different philosophies of life.

It was the flag that first attracted my attention. I have a special fondness for the Stars and Stripes. Not only have I learned in and out of school here in America the history and meaning of Old Glory, but also I have had the extraordinary fortune to live under, and get out from under alive, hammers and sickles, and to sojourn for a period in lands where no one really believes for a minute that useful stevedores were created the equals of perfectly useless dukes. Whenever I see a very large American flag anywhere except at the head of a parade, on a flagpole, or in the window of an honest citizen on the Fourth of July, Memorial Day, or some such appropriate occasion, I instantly am seized with grave misgivings that beer, cancer cure, or the Communist Party may be behind the national colors. If on investigation the worst proves true, as it usually does, I am reminded forcibly of the famous Englishman who made the much quoted remark about patriotism and scoundrels.

I was, of course, relieved to learn that, in this case, the flag was being used to advertise, not the subversive Nazi Bund, but the indubitably respectable and highly patriotic committee of the venerable sunflower sage, William Allen White. I walked right in to offer my felicitations and, I must confess, for a not so praiseworthy ulterior reason. To tell the whole truth my first call on the local cohorts of the aged gentleman from Kansas had two rather sordid motives: I thought there might be a story in the Committee and, as an old conspirator and veteran propagandist, I wanted to see how they did it. Propaganditis is like malaria, it gets in the bones and breaks out violently with changes in the political weather. If you have ever had anything to do with guiding the public thought in the right

direction you are certain to get, from time to time, an irresistible urge to investigate the latest techniques in molding opinion.

I did learn a few new angles at the William Allen White Committee offices. Back in the days when I worked for Moscow Joe Djughashvili, we had a simple formula which was applied to all prospective Comrades and fellow travelers who came to our offices seeking information about the Soviet Utopia and the chances of constructing a similar earthly paradise here in the United States. A personable and soft spoken Comrade was permanently delegated to the task of handling all innocents and chance passers-by who strayed into his particular propaganda station. It was his duty to greet the prospect, smile reassuringly, and by means of a discreet question now and then induce the subject to let down his hair and have a good cry. Above all, our greeter had to be prepared to answer with a great show of frankness and calm assurance any and all questions that might be asked.

But the William Allen White Committee, at least the local branch of it, seems to have improved upon these simple and apparently outmoded methods. I wandered around the office aimlessly for some time without drawing so much as a glance from anyone. Not until I began filling my pockets with pamphlets from a little table, under the mistaken impression that they were free, did I elicit the slightest notice. This *faux pas*, however, got results. It brought on the dead run a prim little fellow of the right age, but not the right type, for trench duty in the first war to save democracy. He informed me in no uncertain terms about the list prices of William Allen White leaflets. Nor did he seem in the least desirous to impart knowledge about the aims and activities of the Committee. When I attempted feebly to prolong the conversation he indicated pointedly that anyone above the level of a low-grade moron could obtain all necessary information on the octogenarian Emporia Patriot and his elderly following merely by reading an article in *Time* magazine.

I might easily have been ushered out of the office without further ado had I not, in sheer desperation, divulged my literary pretensions and my burning desire to do an article on the William Allen White Committee. This sally was followed by immediate and rather startling action. Two large, over-age shock brigaders—quite well enough padded with flesh to withstand severe shocks, incidentally, and

quite too wide in the beams for duty in any trenches that I have ever seen—rushed to the support of their small comrade. The three of them crowded me into a corner and fired volleys of questions which left me pretty well riddled. They were evidently most interested in hereditary diseases in my family, criminal tendencies in me, and the amount of subsidy received from Hitler by the magazines for which I write.

When I got myself reorganized behind my secondary line of defense after this frontal attack, I intimated as politely as possible that in my previous reportorial experience it had been the interviewer who asked the questions and not the interviewed.

I said: "Gentlemen, please! Just a question or two which may help me to give to the world, or that small part of the world that I can reach, my conception of the William Allen White Committee. Now, gentlemen, does your Committee favor a declaration of war against Germany?"

The question called forth a good many voluble words, which summed up in my mind to the total that the gentlemen favored a war against Germany without declaration. I was informed with considerable vehemence that wars are no longer declared—merely waged presumably, which is, no doubt, a very comforting circumstance to the families of the soldiers who are killed and maimed.

Once the ice was broken, the interview proceeded apace. I learned that neither the Committee nor any of its individual members favored transferring our fleet and air force, *totally*, to Britain. All were opposed to sending American men across the Atlantic or Pacific *at this time*, largely because Britain had not yet asked for such help. In fact the impression grew upon me that these patriotic gentlemen were consciously or subconsciously far more concerned with the needs of Britain than with those of America. I found myself playing a little game with mathematics as the interview went on. Psychologists might be able to draw significant conclusions from the fact that the words Britain, England, and British Empire entered the conversation approximately ten times as often as the United States and America.

Eventually I was led to a wall and shown a chart on which the German, Italian and Japanese fleets, arbitrarily augmented by the British fleet, which the Committee has already shifted to *Der Fuehrer* in its collective mind, are graphically contrasted to the feeble naval forces of the United States. I was here told at length about the fiendish intentions of the little slant-eyed devils over in Japan, who are, as everybody knows, born with a raging desire to kill as many Americans as possible during their span.

Battleships, of course, bring bombers to mind and the discussion soon got into the air, a sphere in which I have a special interest as a man who has been on the receiving end of a great many more bombings than I can enumerate or remember, and one who has published articles on the subject of war aviation in leading nationally circulated periodicals. I thought that I might contribute something valuable to this phase of the conversation,

but I was disillusioned quickly. Instead of teaching I learned most amazing things of the imminence of a Hitler aerial blitzkrieg on Omaha and Milwaukee.

The men of William Allen White knew thoroughly, without having been closer than several thousand miles to a bomber in action, not only aviation, but also everything that ticked in the minds of several million individual Americans. As a parting shot the broadest of the broad-beamed patriots fired in my direction the general statement that all those who disagreed with the William Allen White Committee on any salient point fell into two categories and two only, the subversive or the idiotic.

I came away from my visit to the White Committee with the definite impression that the organization is a propaganda agency which, to further its ends, makes use of largely the most cruel and vicious propaganda known—the propaganda of fear. It does not matter whether the ends are good or bad so far as this point is concerned. The important fact is that the Committee is endeavoring to implement its program by terrorizing the American public. The main tactics are: first, to frighten opponents into silence by branding them agents of Hitler; and second, to convince the ignorant that the destruction of their homes may occur at any moment.

Nor is the Committee at all scrupulous about the methods employed to obtain these objectives. Any examination of its literature must certainly reveal clearly to those capable of analysis the extent to which fear mongering and incitation to hatred is used and the palpable disregard of truth that prevails.

I have before me a Committee pamphlet entitled *Ten Billion Dollars Is Not Enough*, which is quite enough to serve as an illustration. The entire pamphlet is in very large red and blue letters on white paper—the national color motif—and it begins:

In nine minutes one-fourth of Rotterdam was blown to bits. Included in the fourth of Rotterdam were, naturally, ordinary buildings, with the usual furnishings. There were children—people who worked, came home tired, liked to be let alone. It was an old, peaceful city, Rotterdam—clean, tidy, full of flowers.

The implications which the Committee wishes the reader to draw from this sort of thing are plain. And the statement about the amount of destruction in Rotterdam is a barefaced lie obvious to anyone who had first hand experience with air raids, but not obvious and extremely terrifying to those who have not. No such destructiveness is yet within the power of bombers, thank God! And it did not occur in Rotterdam as has been attested indisputably by dozens and hundreds of reputable witnesses. Larry Rue of the *Chicago Tribune*, one of the few American reporters who was in Rotterdam before, during, and after the bombardment, made a careful survey as soon as possible and his findings show that not more than one or two per cent of the buildings was destroyed. Loss of life was exceedingly light considering the intensity of the attack. These results check very well with my own personal observations in many similar affairs. I am one of

those who believe that bombing is quite terrible enough without the aid of vivid scare stories designed to drive the neurotic into absolute madness.

I am one of those who believe intensely that the United States should at all costs avoid participation in any European or Asiatic war. I may be in a minority in so believing, but I feel sure it is still a pretty sizable minority. Besides, to my understanding the essence of democracy is contained in the principles which protect the rights of minorities and individuals to have and express opinions, however unpopular. I, for one, certainly mistrust the methods and avowed aims of the William Allen White Committee, and I have no confidence whatever in the basic patriotism of men who can declare or intimate that this great country has existed as an independent nation for 150 odd years solely on

the sufferance of the Royal Navy. Minorities have frequently been right in the history of this and other countries. If we are in a minority we need not be ashamed of it.

My brief contact with the William Allen White Committee and its literature goes far toward convincing me that we are a good minority which had better begin quickly to make itself heard. I think our voice in the long run will prove more American than that of the people who keep their bodies in America and their hearts and minds in foreign lands, the while they do their best to brand as subversive agents of Hitler all those who do not accept their version of things.

I wonder if it would be subversive to say a prayer for the William Allen White Committee? I pray that they do not get this nation into war.

THE SORT OF CITIZEN THAT SHOULD BE IN POLITICS

FIRST WARD COUNCILMAN

FOR a long while, this little fifteen-thousand-inhabitant town where I live was able to boast, with questionable pride, that we had "the finest batch of city officials that money could buy." Then, quite by accident, an honest man was elected. The result would be funny if it were not so desperately dangerous and pathetic.

We are telling the honest official all our intimate family troubles and begging him to solve them. We are asking him whether we should try to run for office; whom we should support in the national primaries; and how we should vote on the various State initiative proposals.

News of this strange creature has gradually spread even beyond the limits of the town. Not long ago, the campaign manager for a District Attorney candidate came to him, introduced himself, and asked his opinion of the candidate's chances of carrying the town, and the county. Fortunately, the predictions which he made on both counts were correct; so now, the small-town crusader has gained the reputation of being a political oracle.

It does not make sense, of course. The young fellow is less intelligent than many who come to him. He knows practically nothing of under-cover campaign tactics and ward skullduggery. He has only a single, rather simple virtue in his favor. Nevertheless, this virtue, apparently, is so unique that it draws fascinated attention to him like the fifth leg on a new-born calf or the extra half-inch

on the end of Cyrano's nose. This fabulous peculiarity of his is the ability to look at a situation with eyes unclouded by greed or partisan hatred, unblinded by the glint of bribery's gold.

So, parts of the town cling to him as though he were a desperate last straw in the boiling maelstrom of present-day democratic government. They accept his advice, first, because he usually advises soundly, and, second, because, even when he leads them along rocky and precipitous pathways, they prove to be the ways of truth and of righteousness and of honor. They are not always physically comfortable, but they are spiritually gratifying.

This man is not important in himself. He is only a run-of-the-mill resident of a small town the name of which is scarcely known a hundred miles away. He will never be found in Who's Who.

However, as a symbol, he looms large and eternally significant. He is the finest fruit of our American civilization. It was of him they dreamed when the founders of this nation set down their Bill of Rights. His is the shadowy goal toward which their successors have stumbled through the bewilderingments and contradictions of our unique theory of government.

As I pointed out in the beginning, he is purely a fortunate accident in our town. Practically unknown, he was willing to offer himself as a sacrifice on the altar of good government. At the time, his constituents voted for him less because they loved and trusted him than because they hated and

feared his opponents. Completely a "dark horse," he somehow slipped into office; and there, by the workings of a modern miracle, he has let neither gold nor flattery distract him from his self-imposed duty.

Other towns have his counterpart. Too few towns, however. He is still unique, noteworthy, a rare, inspiring promise of better days to come.

This is true not because there are too few good men in every village and hamlet. It is due, basically, to a misconception on the part of most of us who go to the polls.

Unfortunately, in the past, we have let the professional politicians lull us into a false sense of righteousness by the catch-phrase: "Be Sure To Vote! Exercise Your Inalienable Privilege of Suffrage!"

In a measure, but only in a very small measure, is this duty to go to the polls and cast your ballot an important one. If no one votes, naturally no one gets elected or reelected and our system of representative government breaks down.

Back of this process of stamping a smudgy little "x" beside the names of yards and yards of candidates, and preliminary to it, is a much more vital task. As a matter of fact, if a dozen of your best citizens in each town looked over this duty methodically and religiously, and thereafter never thumped another "x" on any ballot during the remainder of their lives, they might still be playing the role of saviors of democracy.

In other words, one of the primary weaknesses of our present system of voting is that we have been choosing our candidates by the Hunt-and-Peck instead of the Touch system. Realizing this, here in our town, we are beginning to translate some of our zeal for "getting out the vote" into efforts to get out someone worth voting for.

City elections here are still four months away. Nevertheless, this afternoon, there was a meeting of a half dozen decent citizens who respect each other and who trust each other's motives. We are going to try to pick three names in each ward, names of men whom we would like to have represent us, if they will. We ask of them very little: unquestioned honesty; reasonable intelligence; and complete independence.

We pick three names in the not overly optimistic hope that one of them will consent to run. Of the honesty and intelligence of all of them we have no doubt. It is the question of their independence which troubles us.

Too often they have notes which may be called prematurely at the local bank; or mortgages on their homes which may be foreclosed by the building and loan association if sufficient pressure is brought to bear. They may own stores whose rents are mysteriously raised; or hold jobs with local concerns who may decide, for no apparent reason, that the jobs will be abruptly terminated.

How wide-spread throughout the nation this particularly vicious form of intimidation may be, there are, unfortunately, no means of ascertaining. In our town, a graft-ridden, gambling-infested, seaside resort, it has reached its despicable worst. Young

men's careers have been ruined. Older men have been forced to move away merely because some of the local politicians make it their business to be big stockholders in the bank, governors of the building and loan association, and important buyers from local retail firms.

Only recently, two fine representative citizens were forced to resign from our council under threat of starvation for their wives and children. In other words, "the gang" uses the money which it dips from the local treasury to drive out competition and keep itself in office.

Even citizens independent in a financial way are often reluctant to run for office. They dislike having their wives called to the telephone to receive anonymous whispers about their husbands from obviously half-drunken women. They are reluctant to have the fenders of their automobiles gouged and their tires slashed while they are attending the movies. They grow weary of sweeping up the garbage which is thrown at their front doors on dark nights.

So, the task of finding men completely independent is a difficult one. Hence, we play safe by choosing three names, hoping that one in each ward may take his courage in his hands and enter the lists.

After that, we must "keep everlastingly at it" to hold him in the minds of the voters, inasmuch as the local newspaper has fallen now into the control of "the gang." We must not only "keep everlastingly at it," but "everlastingly at him," buoying him up when he loses heart, encouraging him when he wearies in well doing, pumping courage into him when the fight seems hopeless and he longs for the peace and isolation of other days.

Once we have his candidacy duly and irrevocably filed, however, we are able to lean back, catch our breaths, and congratulate ourselves that the toughest part of our job has been accomplished.

After that, we have campaign literature published. We try to make speaking opportunities for him; plan that transportation be available for the aged and the crippled on election day. But, as for "getting the vote out," we know that others are seeing to that, our rivals as well as those who still believe that that is the decisive element of any election.

Naturally, we welcome their help. We encourage them all we can, cooperate with them to the fullest. But, deep in our own minds, we know that we have performed the harder task, the unseen, unheralded job of giving the voters something good to vote for and telling them in as many ways as we can how good it really is. If the voters have been shown the good and refuse to choose it this year, at least we have helped a little to educate them. If we have fallen short of the task which we set for ourselves, we are confident that at the next election. . . .

Because, hardened and disillusioned as we have become in this plug-ugly game of small-town politics, we are still starry-eyed enough to believe that the majority of our voters, if they are given a chance to choose good, and are shown conclusively that it is good, will eventually come to our way of thinking.

LABOR BREACH OR UNION MONOPOLY?

BERNARD H. FITZPATRICK

THE phrase you always hear when our public men speak of the relations between the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations is: "The unfortunate breach in the ranks of labor."

There is a sense in which the "breach in the ranks" is unfortunate; and the misfortune lies in the fact that it puts our public men on the spot. Too, it reduces the power and the pelf of certain labor leaders. But these misfortunes the employe, the employer and the good public can bear with a smile.

Now let us look at what the employe must frown upon. He has for some years been struggling for the principle that he is entitled to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of his own choosing. That is a good principle. Everybody today admits it. Even Mr. Tom Girdler gives it at least lip-service. The controversy today is not about the principle, but about its ill-fitting dress, the Wagner Act. Clad in a better garment, the Railway Labor Act, it has brought, so far as may be in a competitive world, justice for the employe, productivity for the employer and peace for the public.

Reflect a moment on what the right to choose a union involves. In what some are pleased to call industrial warfare, the large nation-wide union has ever been the big gun, the only efficient means at the disposal of the employe for the attainment of his ends. Save in a small number of peculiarly circumstanced cases, the one-shop union has been a pea-shooter. As the late Chief Justice Taft put it: "To render their combination at all effective, employes must make their combination extend beyond the confines of one shop."

Now by merging the A. F. of L. and C.I.O., you will necessarily harden the jurisdictional lines of their member unions. That is to say that, after the merger, a street-car conductor, who might previously have joined the C.I.O.'s Transport Workers or the A. F. of L.'s Amalgamated Association of Street Car Employees will no longer have his choice. The only adequate representation to be had will be through some one organization.

The policies of that one organization may be obnoxious to employes; it may be dictatorially operated, graft-ridden, and crawling with corruption. Or it may be in the rather more blessed state of having a known racketeer for a leader. But by merging the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O., you have robbed the employe of his choice between effective unions and compelled him to join a union obnoxious to him or remain unorganized.

So much for the short-term welfare of the employe. Taking the long view, we find a worse vista.

With effective competition for the favor of the employe removed, what will be the stimulus of the colonels of this regiment to serve those in the ranks? For your answer, look at the inertness and complacency which was the A. F. of L. before the C.I.O. galvanized it back into life. Can vitality be preserved when the opposition which is life itself is removed? Human nature being what it is, ten years will see a labor movement devitalized, labor leaders smug once more, membership gradually sloughing off, and no one intent on the business of improving the condition of labor.

With vitality will go the possibility of developing a better breed of labor leader, which is the sorest want of labor today. With it, too, will go the possibility of discovery under the microscope of everyday use wherein the craft-union idea is better than the industrial, or vice versa, and of discovering newer and better organizational principles.

Now what about the employer? He is regarded as the chief sufferer from jurisdictional disputes between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. Has he not a legitimate complaint against conditions as they are? Let him answer two questions:

1. Would you prefer to risk being the victim of a chance jurisdictional dispute or to be saddled with the one union in your field if it were corrupt?
2. Would you prefer to risk being the victim of a chance jurisdictional dispute or to face a union of such magnitude that your contract would be the result of *force majeure* rather than of bargaining?

Your complaint, Mr. Employer, is not against rivalry between unions. That is good for you, directly, because it tends to equalize bargaining power, and indirectly, because the possession by your employes of adequate bargaining representatives keeps them happy and productive. Your complaint is against the failure of the law adequately to protect your employes in their choice, which the law should do, with adequate safeguards against infringement of the gains that others have won.

No discussion today is complete unless it embraces the public. To the public, then, I say: "Your interests lie not in a labor regimented in unbroken ranks, but in a labor which has the right of free men, the right to choose. Your interests lie in the vital stream of competition, not in the sluggish, changeless canal of forced unity. Your peace will sometimes be disturbed by jurisdictional disputes, but it is within your power to bring them within the bounds of reason. Not without reason have the Bishops branded as immoral a monopoly-control of labor."

We still have the politicians with us, offering an olive branch grown on the tree of union. But their tree is rooted in the error that laws are intended to stifle the cries of the lowly. These cries will certainly be stifled if but one mouthpiece be allowed them.

All of us are for freedom of choice, but with all that it implies: a choice that is real, that is effective, that is not aborted by the destruction of alternatives.

As for the A. F. of L. and C.I.O.—I am for both, and several more.

THE LAITY BEGS FOR SPIRITUAL AID

IMELDA C. RAUSCH

I AM NOT a public-spirited woman. I have never written a letter to the Voice-of-the-People; nor am I given to reading papers at Study Clubs and Women's Welfare Councils. Indeed, the last time I touched my old typewriter was when I wrote my final essay for English 140 on "Oedipus, the Tragic Hero." You would have been surprised, too, at what a really tragic hero he turned out to be by the time my paper was returned to me! From all this you may gather that I am speaking to you as a complete amateur on a subject that has confused and distressed me for many months. What, I want to know, have we done, reverend and dear Fathers everywhere, to lead you to believe that we, the laity, like to be catapulted through our religious service like pebbles from a sling?

I am not writing this missive in lavender and old lace; I am not one of the crochet-collared, arthritic, all-day-ahead-of-me little old ladies you see every morning at your seven o'clock Masses, protesting this new order of things. No; I come to Church these brisk mornings in the camel coat I wore to college, and saddle shoes, and the pork pie I blame for a sinus infection when I wore it on a rainy day. I am a normal, every-day sort of parishioner, with a very new husband and a small home, and a budget to keep, a budget for time as well as for money.

We are the sort of people who come to your church dances because we would rather do that than play bridge. Saturdays, in fall, we probably have taken many of you with us down to South Bend for the game, or to Gary for the ski meet in the winter. There is nothing out-of-the-ordinary about us. I want to impress that on you, that we are Mr. and Mrs. Common-or-Garden Parishioner, from Kennebec to Seattle. And we do not like our Masses streamlined. We want to live every bit as full a life spiritually as we do physically. And you are cramping our style by snipping off the trimmings every Sunday, and setting a fourteen-minute record for daily Requiem High Mass.

Let me try to explain what happens. We arrive at Mass Sunday morning both expecting to take part in the Holy Sacrifice and receive Communion. Laudably, on the stroke of the hour, our curate emerges from the sacristy, strides to the altar, arranges the Missal with a dexterous series of flips, recalls his intentions with a brief nod, and descends the steps, vestments fluttering, to begin the Sacrifice.

Nothing very amiss so far, but, alas, what follows? Desperately flicking the pages of my missal, I manage to gallop through the prayers at the foot of the altar, and while raising the ribbon for the Introit, I hear the Kyrie and Collects already echo-

ing into silence. Spurring myself to greater effort, I begin the Epistle which the celebrant reads silently. I remember wistfully the measured dignity of Pauline Latin repeated softly in the grave, accurate diction of our college chaplain. On my way back to the Ordinary for the "Munda Cor Meum," I am intercepted by the words of the Gospel, and return to the Proper. Here, skimming, gull-like, over the text, I finish, miraculously, on time. Perspiring now, but flushed with my success, I sit for the respite provided by announcements.

Sadly we hear that poor little old Mrs. Comfort has died. May she rest in peace, Amen, we say quickly. The school has been painted . . . the coal has been ordered . . . subscriptions will be taken . . . Mother's Club members will call at the homes, etc., etc. This all takes five minutes. No time to read the Gospel. Sermon? Bless you, my innocents, no; we are already genuflecting for the Creed.

My mind goes back to poor little Mrs. Comfort. Last week I picked her up on the way to the station. She was going to Church to say a Rosary, she said, for Grandma Sneck who had just died. It was raining, and her plump cheeks were like apples from trying to walk faster than her rheumatism allowed. . . . If only I had seen her sooner, before she got so wet. It was pneumonia. Thinking of the Rosary in her little cold hand then, I wondered if we really should not have taken a minute for at least a Hail Mary.

With the Offertory now well under way, I lay aside my Missal, defeated. I cannot keep up. Absently watching the floating chasuble and swift deft movements of the hands, I am reminded of a surgeon working. In such a manner do they act, quickly, smoothly, to stave eternity from a laboring heart. But here, when in his hands for such a fleeting minute's space Eternity will nestle, oh so lightly, why, why hurry so to have it over?

There it is, the shower of little silver bells, heralding the moment of Consecration. Then, raising eager eyes to the Host, I find the chalice coming down instead. It's over! Just like one-two-three.

By now there is a darkness in my heart; this joyless, neat, efficient, so-many-revolutions-per-minute kind of Liturgy leaves me cold as a stone, and my soul sick.

When we were in college, above and beyond the instruction in doctrine, the discipline, and the social aspects of our Faith, we found another facet, more precious, exquisite in its depth, supremely beautiful: a personal possession; union. Its achievement was a slow process. Courses in Liturgy brought to symbol and psalm, to music and ritual, a new significance; philosophy and ethics sharpened our understanding, disciplined our minds, making our Faith, so long a docile habit, of a sudden, rationally, maturely, vigorously, our own. All this, combined with the daily Mass offered in our chapel by a Friar whose deliberate, reverent, piercing concentration sealed in our hearts forever such a passionate devotion to the holy Eucharistic Sacrifice as to leave there desire for Divine fulfillment to the end of our days. With such memories, I know with my whole being that where time is allowed by the Cele-

brant for his congregation fully to share at least inwardly in the mystery of the sacred Oblation, he will see the number of his regular communicants increasing weekly. He will have fed his flock in the meadow where summer never ends; beauty at last will be theirs; and peace, and infinite delight.

We are your followers, dear Fathers, we do not want you to be making us concessions and compromises. We want you to set us a standard to which we must attain. In your desire to cooperate with us more fully, to adapt yourselves to the accelerated tempo of our urban lives, you have sacrificed your own serenity, and have miraculously managed to reconcile within yourselves this split-second performance with personal devotion. You have made this sacrifice generously, thinking that we desire only the speediest possible means to dispense our obligations. But, because we have permitted the golf-bag-toting hoverer in the vestibule and the little-man-having-a-big-day-at-the-office minority to be more eloquent and vociferous than ourselves, the average Common-or-Garden Parishioner, (remember?) you have been erroneously led to believe that you are satisfying the demands of the greater majority of your faithful.

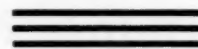
Your people *want* spiritual experience. Blindly they have turned to Novenas. You have seen them standing in line blocks long waiting for services. You have seen the pamphlets shuttling from hand to hand, the leaflets fluttering from prayer-books. And musing charitably, you have thought: "Ah, it brings them to Church, at least; it is good." I have been urged at meetings, teas, over the grocery counter, Heaven knows where, to come and try a Novena—"it's marvelous," "it never fails," "you get everything you ask for." Swallowing the fireworks exploding behind shut teeth, I murmur: "Thank you, I must." One would think it was a vitamin pill, or a tonic!

If, on the other hand, these hungry people, harassed by insecurity and the fear of war, could only grasp what was given us so patiently at a Catholic college. If they could learn fully to realize the immense privilege of offering with the priest, in union with the Divine Victim Himself present upon the altar, the precious sacrifice of adoration, thanksgiving, pardon and petition to our Heavenly Father, here at last would be a tower of strength built among your people, Fathers, by your own hands.

Teach us all to use a Missal, explain the Sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist, in consistent, vigorous, adult courses. Instruct us in Christian ethics, lecture inspiringly on society, freedom, the use of wealth, the family, labor and Christian culture. Take us into your confidence as being spiritually hungry, hungry as yourselves, eager, companions on the sharp path to perfection.

Stop humoring us as the "play-boy laity," and give us back to the Church Militant, refreshed, alert, rationally confirmed in our belief, passionately possessing the fruit of God's love. We want to wear the ring of the elect, the stone full-faceted and beautiful as the star-lit sky, worthily; aware of its significance, so terribly valuable, being dearly bought of years too long for our remembering.

DIRTY ARE MY HANDS



Yes, they *are* dirty
And they're rough
And knobby and calloused.
And I'm proud of the dirt
And the knobs and the callouses.
I didn't get them that way
By playing bridge
Or drinking afternoon tea out of dainty cups
Or playing a well-advertised Good Samaritan
At Charity Balls.

*I got them that way
By working with them
And I'm proud of the work and the dirt.*

Those callouses, you see,
Came from gripping a sweaty, grimy pickhandle
Down in the bowels of coal mines;
And while I've worked
In the filthy mines,
I've thought
Of many a family
That sits in comfort in a warm house
While the snow and the wind blow without.

And I've thought of blazing furnaces
In factories
That turn out all the things
That men need
And all the things
They think so hard they need
That they actually do need them.

People are warm and happy,
And people have the things they need
Because my hands are dirty.
I'm proud of my dirty hands.

It's dirty work
Digging roads
Laying tar and setting cement,
Dirty hard work,
That puts knots in your knuckles
And knots in your spine;
But it's a grand, smooth ribbon of road
That carries cars
From city to city and from city to country
On a fine Sunday afternoon
And the family climbs into the family Ford
And away they go
To hear a cow moo
And smell a blade of grass.
And it's a strong, sturdy road
Those towering trucks need
That carry the produce of town and city
To city and town.
And the truck drivers
And the Sunday drivers
Roll along in safety and confidence

Because my hands are dirty.
I'm proud of my dirty hands.

You soil your hands, too,
When you grip the wheel of a three-ton truck
And roll through the long night,
So that babies at dawn
May have their milk,
Milk brought to town
By my dirty hands,
Oh, I'm proud of my dirty hands.

It's not the soft, white hand
That burrows through the earth
To dig your subways
Or your tunnels under the river,
But it's a nice clean job our dirty hands do,
And a beautiful job,
And it's a work of art
In steel or concrete or cement
That our dirty labor turns out in the end.

*Why shouldn't I feel proud
Of the work they do,
These dirty hands of mine?*

You've seen my hands
Holding a dancing devil of a rivet
Away up on the twentieth
Yes, on the fiftieth or the sixtieth floor
Of the skyscrapers.
Maybe no one needs skyscrapers,
But they are nice to look up at
And nice to gaze down from,
Those Gothic spires of Gotham,
And there's air away up high in them;
And the soul of business
Seems to need that air
To keep our commerce going
And our country prosperously alive.
I'm proud of my dirty hands.

You don't wear fancy mittens
To load ships
And swing cargoes to the dock;
Nor down in the boiler room
Of the Empress of the Ocean,
When you're piling on the coal
Or cleaning furnaces,
Or when you're swabbing decks
And painting stacks.

My hands
Are the hands of brick-layers and plumbers,
Of boilermakers
And truckdrivers and coal-heavers,
And tunnel-hogs and longshoremen
And streetcleaners and carpenters
And engineers and machinists
And stokers and firemen
And trainmen and brakemen
And workers in steel
And coal miners and body-builders
And cooks and butchers and busboys
And scrubwomen.

They are not pretty hands.
They are dirty and knobby and calloused.
But they are strong hands
Hands that do
Hands that mould and fashion and create,
Hands
That make so much
That the world must have or die.

Someday, I think,
The world should go down on its knees
And kiss
All the dirty hands of the working world,
As in the days long past,
Armored knights
Would kiss the soft hands
Of ladies fair.
I'm proud of dirty hands.

The world
Has kissed such hands.
The world
Will always kiss
Such hands.
Men and women put reverent lips
To the hands
Of Him
Who held the hammer and the saw and the plane.
His
Weren't pretty hands, either,
When they chopped trees
And dragged rough lumber
And wielded a carpenter's tools.
They were a workingman's hands,
Strong,
Capable,
Proud hands.
And they weren't pretty hands,
When the executioners got through with them.
They were torn right clean through
By ugly nails,
And the blood was running from them,
And the edges of the wounds
Were raw
And dirty and swollen;
And the joints were crooked,
And the fingers
Were horribly bent in a mute appeal
For love.

They weren't pretty hands, then,
But, O God,
They were beautiful
Those hands
Of the Saviour.
I'm proud of those dirty hands,
Hands of my Saviour,
Hands
Of my God.

*And I'm proud of my hands, too,
Dirty hands,
Like the hands of my Saviour,
The Hands of my God.*

JOHN P. DELANEY, S.J.

CHRONICLE

THE ADMINISTRATION. John Cudahy submitted his resignation as Ambassador to Belgium. . . . Sumner Welles, Under-Secretary of State, announced that the United States would establish a consulate general in Vladivostok. This is the first time the Bolshevik Government has permitted the United States to establish a consular office in the Soviet Union outside of Moscow. Frequent conferences between the State Department and Soviet Ambassador Oumansky continued. . . . The White House announced designation of Paul V. McNutt, Federal Security Administrator, as "coordinator of all health, medical, welfare, nutrition, recreation and other related fields of activity affecting the national defense." . . . President Roosevelt allotted from emergency funds an additional \$25,000,000 for expenses connected with sites leased from Great Britain for naval and air bases, bringing the total amount allocated for this purpose to \$75,000,000. . . . President Roosevelt signed the legislation expanding the 1918 Anti-Espionage Act to make sabotage a Federal offense in peacetime as well as during war. . . . The Army Air Corps released to the British R.A.F. a device to map enemy country from the air at night. This action followed the Army's release of its Sperry bomb sight to the British. . . . Joseph P. Kennedy announced his resignation as Ambassador to Great Britain, declared he would devote his time to "the greatest cause in the world today, to help the President keep the United States out of war." . . . President Roosevelt signed amendments to the Philippine Constitution, one of which permits two four-year Presidential terms instead of the present one six-year term, but bans a third term. . . . On the cruiser *Tuscaloosa*, President Roosevelt sailed for a cruise in the Caribbean.

CONGRESS. Following a dinner conference between President Roosevelt and Congressional and Treasury fiscal leaders to explore the question of tax levies for 1941, announcement was made there would be no further retroactive taxes on 1940 incomes of individuals and corporations. . . . Declaring the United States is headed straight for war, Senator Johnson said: "We are edging nearer and nearer to it every day. Only a miracle can keep us out. Those in command of us are perfectly mad to be a part of the game." Predicting that the United States would emerge from the conflict with a monumental debt and the "ill will of the countries we go to aid," the Senator added: "When I think of sending our boys into war, it makes me sick at heart." . . . Following the recent census, eight States will have larger delegations in the House of Representatives to be elected in 1942. California gained three House seats: Arizona, Florida, Michigan, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon and Tennessee gained

one each. Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma and Pennsylvania each lost one seat. . . . The House completed action on the Walter-Logan Bill, subjecting rules and regulations of executive agencies to court reviews, and sent the measure to the White House. The final action came when the House adopted Senate amendments to the legislation by a vote of 176 to 51.

AT HOME. William Green was re-elected for his seventeenth term as President of the American Federation of Labor at its New Orleans convention. . . . Captain John T. Prout, Jr., of the New York National Guard, was acquitted by a court martial sitting in New York City of a charge that he had unlawfully given ammunition away. Captain Prout was one of the defendants in the recent trial of men, some of them associated with the Christian Front, charged with conspiracy to overthrow the Government. He was acquitted of the conspiracy charge, but the jury disagreed on a count involving the giving away of National Guard ammunition. . . . The Belgian-American Educational Foundation, of which ex-President Herbert Hoover is chairman, issued a booklet, composed by military, naval and diplomatic observers, absolving King Leopold of blame. . . . Standing before a large audience in New York, Wendell L. Willkie proposed a toast "to the President of the United States," called for a free debate without personal abuse in the discussion of national issues. . . . The legislative committee investigating subversive activities in New York City schools heard a professor, a former Communist, assert that nine professors of Brooklyn College, a tax-supported institution, were active Reds. He described a "fraction" meeting attended by one hundred college faculty members representing Communist organizations at the city colleges, Columbia University, New York University, where "party-line" strategy was discussed. The legislative committee authorized contempt proceedings against twenty-five former and present staff members of New York City public schools and colleges for refusing to testify.

WASHINGTON. The Census Bureau placed the country's total population at 131,669,275, as compared with 122,775,046 ten years ago. . . . Of the 14,500 men in the first selective service contingent, approximately fifteen per cent were rejected because of physical deficiencies. Pronouncing the rate inordinately high, military authorities disclosed they had expected it would not exceed two per cent. . . . The White House announced that the Export-Import Bank had opened another credit of \$50,-

000,000 for China, and that the Treasury would make another \$50,000,000 available from its stabilization fund to support China's currency. The announcement followed Japan's ratification of a peace treaty with the regime it had set up in Nanking, China. . . . Lawrence W. Cramer resigned as Governor of the Virgin Islands. . . . Private airlines agreed to turn over to the National Defense Advisory Commission new airplane engines recently delivered to them and to relinquish to the Commission \$7,500,000 worth of equipment which they had ordered for maintenance and expansion of their 1941 services. . . . Total of merchant ships purchased by Great Britain in the United States since the war began was placed at 130. . . . Cabinet members and other Federal officials discussed the British financial and shipping situation. A British financial expert was present at the meeting. Following the conference, Jesse H. Jones, Secretary of Commerce and Federal Loan Administrator, declared: "Britain is a good risk for a loan." . . . Secretary Morgenthau remarked that he agreed with Mr. Jones. . . . A plan to rehabilitate "ghost towns" with the view of speeding up production for national defense was outlined by Morris L. Cooke, engineer of the National Defense Advisory Commission. . . . Stating that his remarks referred to both parties, Chairman Gillette of the Senate Campaign Expenditures Committee, declared that never before in American history has there been such extensive use of money as in the campaign just closed. . . . President Roosevelt and Congressman Dies conferred for fifty minutes in the White House. Following the meeting, Mr. Dies said it was the duty of every citizen to cooperate with the President but that "this does not mean a sacrifice of honest convictions on fundamental questions." . . . Referring to proposals to regulate network broadcasting made by a committee of the Federal Communications Commission, Senator Gurney asserted they would "strangle, if not impose a death sentence upon the established networks."

THE VATICAN. Pope Pius issued an appeal for a Christmas truce, granted permission to blackout countries for the celebration of the Christmas Midnight Mass earlier on Christmas Eve. . . . Declaring the Holy See is "overlooking nothing that can bring at least spiritual comfort" to war victims, the Pontiff said: "It is fair to hope and trust that at least on that holy night and on that holy day all belligerents will declare a truce, either spontaneously or by mutual accord, so that the clash of arms shall not cover the angelic chorus of peace which is repeated in the sacred temples and so that new fraternal bloodshed shall not disturb or miserably extinguish the heavenly joy of that hour." . . . Continuing, Pope Pius wrote: "We decree and establish *motu proprio* . . . in those regions in which blackout laws are in force, it is permissible for individual Ordinaries to concede" that the Mass "which is usually celebrated at Christmas Eve midnight, be celebrated instead the evening of Christmas Eve in such a way, however, that between the

end of the sacred rite and the moment in which the above-mentioned laws are enforced there remains some interval of time." People attending the earlier Mass fulfil the obligation of attending Mass on Christmas. Persons receiving Communion on the morning of Christmas Eve may receive again in the early evening Mass of the same day, provided they have fasted for four hours, but they cannot, in this event, receive Communion on Christmas Day.

WAR. The Greeks, aided by the British, captured Pogradec and Premedi in Albania, pushed the Italians back on a 100-mile front. . . . Concentrated Nazi aerial assaults produced great fires, raised heaps of ruins in Southampton, Bristol, Plymouth, Birmingham, while London was sustaining lesser blows. . . . With its submarines operating in "wolf packs," Berlin claimed the sinking of fifteen merchant vessels and a cruiser in one British convoy, the sinking of six merchantmen in another. . . . The R.A.F. dropped a deadly hail of explosive and incendiary bombs on Cologne, Stettin, Mannheim, Politz, Naples, Turin, Brindisi, Bremen, Hamburg, Boulogne, Lorient. . . . Foreign correspondents, escorted by the Italian Government over warships said to have been injured by the British, reported the ships looked unharmed. . . . Border warfare flamed between Thailand (Siam) and French Indo-China.

INTERNATIONAL. With thirty-one foreign delegations, including that headed by United States Vice President-elect Wallace, present, General Manuel Avila Camacho took the oath as President of the Mexican Republic on December 1. . . . Archbishop Martinez called on all Catholics to cooperate with President Camacho, remarking that he "is the only President of Mexico in many years who has declared publicly and emphatically that he is a Catholic." The prelate intimated that the new President had expressed a wish to satisfy "just aspirations of public opinion, particularly in matters related to religious freedom." . . . On November 30, in Nanking, China, General Nobuyuki Abe, representing the Tokyo Government, signed a peace treaty with President Wang Ching-wei, former Chinese Premier and now head of the Japanese-sponsored regime in China. In the treaty, Japan agrees to evacuate all China except the northern provinces and Inner Mongolia within two years after "general peace" is restored. General Chiang Kai-shek's Chinese Government in Chungking characterized the pact as a "performance for Japanese home consumption." . . . The eight-day Iron-Guard reign of terror in Rumania, which caused the death of 400, was brought under control. . . . President Higinio Morinigo set up a dictatorship in Paraguay. . . . In the London House of Commons, a suggestion for a conference to consider a negotiated peace was voted down, 341 to 4. . . . Germany incorporated Lorraine into the Reich. . . . Britain and Spain signed a commercial agreement.

ANOTHER HALF LOAF

WITH anguish, groans and reluctance, the A. F. of L. has taken a stand against union officials who prey upon the wage-earner. But it is a shaky and a dubious stand, something like a stagger. What the Federation actually did was to promise that, should any official use a union as an agency for racketeering and gangsterism, its executive council will apply the forces of its "influence" as a corrective.

Gangsters in the labor movement will greet that promise with pleasure. Naturally, they did not expect the A. F. of L. to ask them to take over every union which has managed to beat them off, but when David Dubinsky introduced his resolution, they had reason to fear that the A. F. of L. would not only decline to approve them, but order their expulsion. That peril has passed. As long as the A. F. of L. condemns their lawless acts, and opposes them with nothing more menacing than the "influence" of its executive council, they feel that they are quite safe.

While we are disappointed in the failure of Mr. Dubinsky to secure approbation for his resolution, it must be admitted that something has been gained by a condemnation of labor racketeering; perhaps enough to allow us to hope that more will be gained at the next convention of the A. F. of L. Taking the resolution in all good faith, it may be supposed that President Green and his associates will create some sort of supervisory and fact-finding agency which will report to the executive council instances that indicate misuse of its affiliates by racketeers and other criminals. The very wording of the resolution, "Whenever the executive council has valid reason to believe that a trade-union official is guilty of such offense" involving moral turpitude, appears to demand a fact-finding agency. Otherwise the council will lack, it seems to us, a necessary source of information.

Still assuming the good faith of the A. F. of L., it may be further supposed that a tribunal will be appointed to judge the cases in which the executive council will use its "influence" against racketeers. The tribunal should be empowered to adopt suitable means of making this influence effective, since influence, if it does nothing more than take the form of advice, will probably be worthless. The only influence which thus far has freed the unions from racketeers, and other criminals, has been influence applied in the form of grand-jury indictments, followed by trial and a penitentiary sentence. Even that form of influence has not always had a permanent effect, since in some instances convicted law-breakers have resumed their offices in the unions on the expiration of their respective sentences.

The A. F. of L. has given us only a half-loaf, and for that we shall try to be grateful. But we cannot help noting that the half was broken from a small loaf made from a poor grade flour. Perhaps Mr. Dubinsky's gratitude is tempered by a similar observation.

EDITOR

WHY?

AN interchange of opinion between the President and Congressman Dies has left each official in the opinion with which the interchange began. Just why the Dies Committee and the Federal Bureau of Investigation cannot work together, is a question for which the public seeks an answer. Presumably the Bureau and the Committee are equally interested in discovering and punishing members of subversive groups in this country, but for some undisclosed reason the Committee has always lacked the approval of the Administration. Perhaps the next Congress will disclose that reason.

ARMS OF THE

THREE weeks ago, the day of prayer for peace appointed by the Holy Father, was observed with unusual solemnity in Saint Peter's, and in thousands of churches throughout the world. Speaking in the Basilica, the Holy Father expressed his ardent desire for "an order of things more harmonious, based upon that justice which soothes passions, allays hatreds, quenches rancor and bickerings; an order which would tend to give every people in tranquillity, in liberty, and in security, that portion which belongs to each."

That the desire of the Holy Father, supported by the prayers of all Christian men and women, may speedily avail with Almighty God, in Whom is full authority over all things that are created, is the wish of oppressed and suffering peoples everywhere. But we cannot search the mind of God. We cannot foresee the dispositions to be made for us by His fatherly providence. But since we assuredly have not made due reparation for our sins, and for the sins of the world, the Holy Father asks us to add to our fervent prayers, daily works of penance and sacrifice.

Since the outbreak of the war, the Pontiff has been insistent in prayer for the afflicted peoples of the belligerent nations, and indefatigable in works undertaken to relieve their spiritual and temporal needs. This spirit of zeal and charity is abundantly manifest in his Letter, issued on December 3, asking that Christmas Day be observed as a day of peace. "It is permissible to hope," the Holy Father writes,

COURTS AND RIGHTS

WHATEVER may happen to the Logan-Walter bill, which the Administration leaders at last grudgingly consented to consider, it is certain that if we wish to maintain an adequate defense for constitutional rights, no Federal agency can hereafter be permitted to make laws, order the arrest of offenders, sit in judgment upon them, and thereafter forbid recourse to the courts. To the claim that the bill destroys "the democratic gains of the last seven years," it is sufficient to say that gains made by destroying the humblest citizen's constitutional rights destroy democracy.

OF THE SPIRIT

"that at least on that holy night and day, a truce will occur among all belligerents, either spontaneously, or through mutual accord."

The frightfulness of this war becomes more vivid in the thought that Europe would welcome an armistice of even twenty-four hours. The sight of thousands of civilians slain from the air becomes even more frightful in these days when the whole world should be preparing for the celebration of the birth at Bethlehem of the Divine Prince of Peace. His coming was heralded by Angels whose message was "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." Year after year for nineteen centuries that gracious message has come to man, and it is grievous to reflect that millions of the children of God have not won peace for the world by lives which manifest their good will. The Prince of Peace wishes to give us peace, that peace which the world cannot impart, but we in our blind folly turn away from Him.

These are days which call us Americans to thoughts of prayer and repentance. We are building up vast armaments. Our factories are working on extended schedules to provide us with ships, guns, planes, and every conceivable instrument of national defense. But what will these avail us unless we shall also prepare our souls for the evil days that all fear, that soon may dawn? In turning away from sin to put our reliance upon God, we shall find for our country a defense made not by man, but by the arms of the spirit.

XAVIER'S CENTENNIAL

THIS year, Xavier University in Cincinnati, better known to its older Alumni as St. Xavier College, is celebrating its centennial. If our congratulations are somewhat belated, they are nonetheless hearty, and we offer them in the name of the editorial staff, and of the Alumni along the Eastern seaboard. We cannot forget that a valued member of our first board of editors, the late Rev. Michael J. O'Connor, S.J., was President of the old college at the turn of the century, and that from the beginning of our work, Father O'Connor's successors in office and the Alumni have proved themselves loyal friends.

What is written in praise of any Catholic college, can be applied, we realize, to any of its compeers. Since the end of every Catholic college is the formation of youth in religion and letters, and since, too, the means adopted to encompass this end are similar, it is inevitable that the graduates of all Catholic colleges should exhibit the effect of this well-defined type of education. Yet every Catholic college has its peculiar distinction, and Xavier's, we think, can be easily singled out as eminent service to its community.

In every decade of its existence, Xavier has trained men whose careers have been singularly useful to religion and good government in Cincinnati, and its neighborhood. One of its early Presidents, the Rev. George A. Carrell, S.J., was chosen by the Holy See to be the first Bishop of Covington, in Kentucky. At the opening of the century, the Archbishopric of Cincinnati was occupied by an alumnus, the Most Rev. Henry Moeller, D.D. In the Church, in law, medicine and education, its Alumni have filled honorable positions in Cincinnati for nearly a century.

Naturally, however, the influence of Xavier University has by no means been confined to the old Queen City of the West. It has supplied colleges and universities in the Middle and Far West and in the South, with presidents, deans and professors. At a recent period, no fewer than eight of our largest colleges and universities had as their presidents Alumni of Xavier University. Among its poets, it can number G. Harrison Conrard and John Bunker; among its historians, the Rev. Thomas Hughes, S.J.; among its orators the Rev. Michael Dowling, S.J., at one time President of Creighton University, and the late Rev. John A. McClorey, S.J., who died untimely, as his hearers thought, literally worn out by his zeal in preaching the word.

Jubilee addresses are now and then laudably vague, but it seems to us that the texts chosen by the speakers at a Xavier celebration on November 24, were remarkably pertinent. Governor Bricker, of Ohio, recalled that Xavier had taught for a century, and still taught, the indisputable truth that religion and education "are inseparable." The Society of Jesus, said the Governor, and Xavier University "had been foremost in teaching that there were definite moral and spiritual laws which must be obeyed," if civil society is to be sustained in its

integrity. The same theme was developed by the Hon. James G. Stewart, Mayor of Cincinnati. "All of us are getting around to the principle which the Jesuits have long promulgated," said the Mayor, "namely, that if you don't have God in government, soon you have no government at all." It need hardly be observed, however, that the doctrines attributed by these officials to the Society of Jesus are simply the teachings of the Church, accepted and fostered by all Catholic institutions.

After a century of labor an institution of learning can count many joys, and perhaps, more occasions which brought sorrow. But its joys will hearten it, and it can learn wisdom from its sorrows. In an eloquent address, the learned Archbishop of Cincinnati, the Most Rev. John T. McNicholas, O.P., warned his hearers against the totalitarianism which is growing in this country. "In consequence of this system," said the Archbishop, "there must be a unified total political endeavor, a total economic effort, a total educational set-up. From these totals follow, naturally, the travesty of a total culture, and then the abominable absurdity of a total religion, which means no religion at all; or, worse, a satanic caricature of religion."

The movement which the Archbishop condemns will be resisted by every Catholic institution of learning in the United States. It will be resisted by all Americans, independent of religious creed, who truly love God and their country. We are sure, too, that among the leaders in the counter-movement for God and country, there will be found the sons of Xavier, inspired by the spirit of their Alma Mater who for a century has taught them and their fathers to order their lives for the greater glory of God.

NO "MERIT" BILL

THE headline in the *New York Times*, "President Signs Merit Bill," and similar captions in other journals, are misleading. What the President approved was the Ramspeck bill which "permits" him to transfer to civil service certain positions now held by incumbents appointed without reference to civil service. Should the President avail himself of this permission, some 200,000 employees will be brought under civil-service regulations, provided that they can pass a "non-competitive" examination.

The Ramspeck bill may mark an improvement, to be adopted at some future time, but it certainly does not establish a merit system. The non-competitive examination may be no examination, in any real sense of the term, and frequently is not.

We have far to go before it can be asserted that our civil-service system is empowered to select a majority of the Government's employees solely because of fitness, evidenced by open, competitive examination. A true merit system would give the Government better service at a lower cost. Probably the only reason why it has not been enforced is the fact that it necessarily deprives the politician of patronage.

THE VOICE

THE priests and the Levites who came down from Jerusalem to confer with John had probably known more than one false prophet. The times were troubled, and as always under such circumstances, evil men and half-crazed fanatics took advantage of the people who were looking for some easement from their distress. As we read the Gospel for tomorrow (Saint John, i, 19-26) it would seem that these messengers put the Baptist through a severe cross-examination. John answered them directly, in words which they could not misunderstand. No, he was not the Christ, nor was he Elias come back to earth, nor was he "the prophet."

It is not surprising that the life and preaching of the Baptist had attracted the attention of the religious leaders in Jerusalem. The great crowds who went out into the desert to hear him, at once understood that he was no ordinary man. We know, as they did not, that John, even before his birth, was "filled with the Holy Ghost" (Saint Luke, i, 15), and that the name he bore was given him by Zachary, his father, at the bidding of the Archangel Gabriel. What the people saw in him was a man of fervent zeal, and of an extraordinarily penitential life. Saint Mark writes (i, 6) that "John was clothed with camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and he ate locusts and wild honey." His preaching had "the spirit and power of Elias" (Saint Luke, i, 17), and it moved great crowds from every class of society to repentance for their sins. For John boldly attacked evils in high places as well as in low, and thereafter, in his love for the sinner, showed him how he could make his peace with God.

Probably the priests and the Levites knew that John was the son of Zachary, the priest, and of Elizabeth, but the reports of the Baptist's work had made them somewhat uneasy. What was this man preaching, and who had authorized him? It is a tribute to their sense of justice that they would neither condemn nor approve him, before they had made an investigation. When John had assured them that he was neither the Christ nor Elias, they asked him "Who art thou?" and in answer the Baptist replied in the words of the prophet Isaias (xl, 3) that he was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness: make straight the way of the Lord." These words gave the priests and Levites an answer which they well understood; John was the forerunner of the promised Messiah. The Baptist then added that the Messiah was actually come; "one in the midst of you, whom you know not."

We who today ponder upon the message of the Baptist are more fortunate than the men and the women who went out into the desert nineteen centuries ago. They heard a prophecy. We know the reality. Jesus is actually in our midst, and we can find Him whenever we wish; we can even draw near to Him, and receive Him into our hearts. But if those hearts are defiled with sin, let us by repentance make them a dwelling-place less unworthy of our King and Saviour. A penitential Advent always ends in a happy and a holy Christmas Day.

CORRESPONDENCE

EXAMPLE

EDITOR: Charles Hooper tests broth by the bubbles on the surface when he advances the prevalence of foreign tongues as one of the principal causes of disunion in America. Expert treasons are for the most part being spoken in meticulous English. It is harder to learn to speak American than to think American, especially for those advanced in years. Patriotism is more a question of essences than frills of speech. May I offer an exquisite example of what I mean?

Last week I sat behind a mother and two children in the local movie theatre. The darkness made nationality unimportant. At the singing of the national anthem, a practice at this theatre, all three before me started immediately to their feet, but in getting up the boy dropped his cap. Instead of singing he started to grope for it, probably thinking only of what mom had threatened to do to him if he lost another. With one definite jerk the mother hauled him to attention and for the rest of the song the three stood motionless, the girl of ten singing clearly and prettily in the way of children taught in American schools. But as soon as the song was over the mother went for her son with a flow of Italian that made every neighbor strain the ear wider. Perhaps not one around her could understand what she said. Perhaps, judging from her intensity, it was just as well she spoke in a foreign tongue. But every one who saw her give it, knew what the sounding smack on her boy's head meant.

What America needs is Americanism at the heart-source. Americanism in the mind. Americanism in the soul. Then it will not matter in what language this Americanism is expressed.

Flushing, N. Y.

MARIE DUFF

SLAINTEI

EDITOR: Despite dire prognostications to the contrary, our Irish-American strain with its Catholic traditions is not dying out. Proof?

A roomful of Murphys, with a smattering of Brennans and Reardons, celebrated last night the first double-wedding anniversary this city (Brooklyn) or any city has seen in a long time. Exactly fifty years ago James and John Murphy, brothers, married Rose and Mary Gallagher, sisters. As an incredible touch to an incredible occasion, one of two reporters present was named Murphy. Mrs. Rose Murphy didn't seem to be hearing the reporter's questions. There was a sudden glistening behind her spectacles as a pretty girl named Ethel Brennan, with the big eyes and dark hair of the Murphys began to sing *Ave Maria*. "That's my granddaughter," said Mrs. Rose Murphy.

Thus ran the human-interest story in the New York Times. And true to the Catholic traditions of the Irish-American family, among the descendants

fortunately present were four priests. Unfortunately Reporter Murphy does not tell us what I am sure is a fact—that at least six of the family were praying in their cloistered chapels that their brothers and sisters, their nephews and nieces would be as true to Catholic and Irish-American traditions as have been the noble Rose and Mary, James and John Murphy of Brooklyn.

New York, N. Y.

D. M. O'CONNELL, S.J.

FALSE WHISKERS

EDITOR: Out where I am, the Episcopal Church is nominally Catholic. In all her missionary work amongst the Indians she has stressed her "Catholic" character always, playing up the branch theory, representing herself as the simon-pure Catholic Church, teaching that Rome, with her Pope and her priesthood, are the outmoded and corrupted representatives of a Church that was reformed by the pliant tool of Henry and Elizabeth. The lengths to which she has gone in practising this deception on a simple-minded people are a matter of historical record. Even well-informed Catholics are not immune. Suppose you are a patient in a Government Indian hospital and an Episcopal minister comes along the corridor dressed in cassock, surplice and stole, and his parishioners call him Father, and he calls himself a priest—you would need considerable historical background to penetrate the deception.

I admit that *deception* is an ugly word to use, especially when applied to Episcopal ministers, for as a class they are fine, cultured gentlemen, wholly lacking that narrow, intolerant bitterness of the small-town Protestant preacher.

With the readers of AMERICA, I would like to know where these "Catholic" Episcopalians are going to class themselves after what happened in the recent convention in Kansas City, Mo. By the vote of its delegates, both clerical and lay, their church has definitely gone over to pure evangelism. When it joined the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America it said in substance to John Wesley (or was it John Knox?): "Push over, John!" and took its place with the maudlin chorus occupying the Protestant bench. The vote must have been bitter gall to the dissenting members, both clerical and lay, who in spite of their old and new alignment, lay claim to Catholic faith. On the other hand,

(The views expressed under "Correspondence" are the views of the writers. Though the Editor publishes them, he may or may not agree with them; just as the readers may or may not agree with the Editor. The Editor believes that letters should be limited to 300 words. He likes short, pithy letters, and merely tolerates lengthy epistles.)

what sweet music it must have been to the ears of those "Protestant" Episcopalians to hear that fraternal delegate, Presbyterian Moderator, Doctor William Lindsey Young, cry out: "My earnest prayer tonight is that I may live to stand before you some time and address, not *your* church, not *my* church, but *our* Church."

If the desire of the convention was to effect unity, it has done this to perfection. They have completely severed any ties that may have bound them to the pre-Reformation Church of England, and from now on, when spelling out the name of their sect, they can use large letters in designating it as *Protestant* Episcopal.

In the November 10 issue of the *Sunday Visitor*, sports-writer Jimmie Corcoran quotes Colonel Egan of the *Boston Record* as saying that if the Harvard University *Lampoon* wants to put over the claim that the Cornell team was made up of professionals, Harvard itself "should come out from behind its false whiskers." With equal emphasis may we not say, in view of the Kansas City decision, that that exotic institution calling itself Anglican Catholic should come out from behind its false whiskers?

Address Withheld

INDIAN MISSIONARY

GEORGIA LAYMEN

EDITOR: Your kind comment on the work of the Laymen's Association is most gratifying to all interested in or connected with the movement, and I know that those still fighting the good fight down there will draw great encouragement from its good wishes.

Your generous reference to me in connection with it is a source of embarrassment to me, for no one realizes better than I the good fortune that was mine in being associated with such a valiant group. I deeply appreciate, however, the spirit which prompted it.

The Laymen's Association has now done its work under a trinity of Popes, a trinity of Apostolic Delegates, a trinity of Bishops, a trinity of editors and executive secretaries and six presidents. The recent convention demonstrated the strength of the foundation it has laid during the first quarter of a century. In that period none outside Georgia has given the Georgia laymen more encouragement than you and the Staffs of AMERICA.

New York, N. Y.

RICHARD REID

FILMS

EDITOR: Recent news stories intimate that another wave of anti-Catholicism is in the air. I have long recognized a factor in our everyday life which is bound to contribute largely to such a situation.

I refer to the motion-picture industry, which works along the lines of least resistance. It offends no nation which can use its product because of the possibility of boycott, but for years, it has been taking unfair advantage of the good nature of the Irish Catholic.

Check your memory. Can you recall the nation-

ality of any disreputable character as portrayed in the movies who did not possess a good old Irish name?

Did you ever see a clergyman, other than a Catholic priest, in attendance on the condemned man in the movies?

If you have not taken note of these things, focus your attention on the names of the characters on the screen from now on and then consider their effect upon the consciousness of the millions of non-Catholics in the United States who cannot help but get the impression that Catholics are an ignorant, criminal people.

The movies are a powerful implement in the weaving of public opinion. I believe that Catholics owe it to themselves and their children to join forces in the eradication of an evil practice which, I hope, has been unintentional on the part of the motion-picture industry.

New York, N. Y.

DRUMMOND MCKAY

EDITOR: In the larger film houses of New York City this week some twenty or more pictures are on view. Among them are: *Thief of Bagdad*, *Letter, Son of Monte Cristo*, *Fantasia*, *Zorro*, *Great Dictator*, *Seven Sinners*, *Northwest Mounted*, *Arise My Love*, *Escape*, *Howards of Virginia*.

Not one of these films has a villain with an Irish name, or even the suggestion of a brogue. On the contrary, these films show vicious Arabian, English, French, Eocene, Spanish, German, Madagascar, Canadian, Nazi and Colonial characters as foils for the hero.

I am not picking the best ten films of the year, but I bet that among them will be *Pride and Prejudice*, *Rebecca*, *All This and Heaven*, *Knute Rockne*, *Long Voyage Home*. No bad Irish in these, either. Nor in other outstanding pictures of the year, such as *Mice and Men*, *Grapes of Wrath*, *Foreign Correspondent*, *Westerner*.

I have seen some estimable Catholic priests this year in the pictures—none quite so appealing as Spencer Tracy in *San Francisco*, or *Boys Town*, but good just the same—O'Brien as Father Duffy, an Irish padre among a lot of other fine Irishmen in the *Fighting 69th*, Joseph Calleia in *Full Confession*, Eugene Pallette as a modern Friar Tuck in *Mark of Zorro*, Basserman and Crisp in the Notre Dame picture, the nice Spanish priest in *Arise, My Love*, the friars in *Brother Orchid*.

Mr. McKay complains that it is always a priest who walks the last mile with the criminal. I admit that it usually is. But I note that for this same reason the motion-picture industry is continually soothing the feelings of people who do not like Catholics and who complain: "The Papists control film morals; they are always glorifying priests, and Confession, and Mass, and lovely heroines kneeling before statues of the Virgin. Can't other Churches offer religious consolation to sinners and the dying? Why don't the films show a few ministers in action? Pastor Hall is the only Protestant man of God who has recently done anything in the films: except perform a fashionable wedding."

New York, N. Y.

D.

LITERATURE AND ARTS

LOUISE GUINEY'S UNNOTED WISDOM

EUGENE H. MURRAY

THE admirers of Louise Imogen Guiney, on reading in the *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* the lines

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire

will confess that Thomas Gray was prophetic. For them, however, "this neglected spot" is not a picturesque cemetery along untrammelled ways, but the world of today, and the "heart once pregnant with celestial fire" one who is no more than a name to the multitude, Louise Imogen Guiney.

Americans, in particular, have cause to regret such forgetfulness, for though Louise Guiney was an expatriate by reason of a desire to champion a lost cause, the revival of the Recusant Poets, she was born, bred and first spread her literary wings in New England, where in queenly fashion she held court and counted among her vassals many a name prominent in American letters. Later, of this period, Ralph Adams Cram avowed that "Lou Guiney was the most vital and creative influence of all of us. In herself she seemed to concentrate and make operative all the best qualities of the great days of English letters."

It would be presumptuous to tell those aware of Catholic literature that Alice Brown has written an appreciative monograph of Louise Guiney which in its own right is a prose masterpiece, that her letters, reservoirs of inspiration, have been edited in two volumes, or that at Holy Cross College there is, in the library, a memorial room dedicated to her and the repository for her manuscripts. In her fullness she is known to them. Moreover, it is not the purpose here to weigh the merits of Louise Guiney as a poet and essayist, but rather to show sketchily that a voice stilled now for many years has much to teach us regarding our conduct of life and our attitude toward it, even though its counsels emanate from an era devoid of radios and streamlined cars. A realization of this will perhaps lure the convinced to a study of her works, and thus accomplish a twofold good.

People have grown accustomed, on account of ever-increasing technological wonders, to think of the past as outmoded, wrapped in lavender, of no use in a complex civilization except as an antique, cobwebbed in a remote corner in the museum of the mind. Chesterton assailed this spirit in a brilliant

chapter in *Orthodoxy*, protesting that it was unfair to bar anyone from an opinion in affairs merely because of the accident of death.

There is a democracy of the dead as well as of the living, and Tradition is the bridge between the two. Often a word uttered long ago gains in appropriateness with age. How shrewd and true was G. K.'s observation will become manifest after an examination of some of the convictions of Louise Guiney.

Heard for the first time, these remarks on education could easily be attributed to today's educators who, alarmed by the absence of integration in the big red schoolhouse and the resultant "knowledge at half cock," are clamoring for a new deal in education:

Youth is the most inspiring thing on earth, but not the best to let loose, especially while it carries swaggeringly that most dangerous of blunderbusses, knowledge at half cock.

Very few can be trusted with an education. In the old days while there was faith, boredom and prostration were not common, and social conditions were undeniably picturesque.

The best to be said of any knowing one among us, is that initiation into noble facts has not ruined him for this world nor the other.

Yet they are excerpts taken from Louise Guiney's essay, *On the Rabid versus the Harmless Scholar*, written in 1897.

Perhaps the following will be construed as a desertion on the part of Louise Guiney of her own sex. Nevertheless, it is an honest expose of the sham of many of the literary luncheon-clubs, featuring authors and poets, bad or indifferent, who, from in front of potted plants, smile benignly and attempt to initiate the seekers after a bottled culture into the misty region of new modes of expression:

To what pass has the ascendant New England readers brought the harmless babes of Apollo. She seeks to master all that is, and to raise a complacent creation out of its lowland wisdom to her mountainous folly's level; she touches nothing that she does not adorn—with a problem; she approves of music and pictures whose reasonableness is believed to be not apparent to the common herd. . . . The arts have a racial shyness; the upshot of this scrutiny of their innocent faces is that they will hide away for good.

Let not the men indulge in a satisfied chuckle or

nod knowingly! Far in advance of Sinclair Lewis, who pilloried the Babbitts with diabolical cleverness, Louise Guiney perceived the trend away from a wholesome sense of values induced by a complete and unswerving devotion to the amassing of wealth. She classified enduringly the custodians and perpetuators of a grind-stone industrial economy, calling them

Smug persons who expire full of years and empty forsooth of all things else, whose lives are indeed covered in several senses by life insurance and who are thought to be the enviable and successful citizens.

While on the subject of material goods, her apothegm, "things useful should never be things desired," would, if understood and put into practice, cause manufacturers to squirm, and billboards, deformation of the countryside, to disappear.

To end in a more encouraging vein, poets and artists and thinkers are appraised justly by Louise Guiney:

The noblest of them is least in love with civilization and its awards; but what they have not hoarded for themselves, strangers hoard for them; and because success is most truly to them a thing foregone, therefore they prevail forever. If they have not "made a living" they have, in the opinion of a young Governor of Massachusetts, a philosopher not of the Franklin breed—"made a life."

Patris, a felicitous title for the essays of Louise Guiney, are leaves of grass strewn along the roads by nomads to indicate to others the way taken. A leaf here and there is sufficient to lead to journey's end. In like manner, since a touch of reticence is effective in the portrayal of a character, no citation has been made from her letters and poems where the daring will discover the fabric of her winged Catholicism in a tapestry of memorable passages and lines. It is a major blunder that Louise Guiney has missed general recognition. Her ideals, centuries old, may be in temporary eclipse, but sooner or later their intrinsic worth will be grasped.

IN RE REVIEWS

HAROLD C. GARDINER

FOUR or five columns weekly are given over in AMERICA to reviewing the new books. We request advance copies from the publishers, the books come in (save occasionally when some publisher, chary of the castigations he foresees, will not send the book asked for), out they go to the reviewer, back comes the review, to be edited and eventually printed. Five or six people handle the book before you read the nicely summarized result—and after all the work is done, we ask: was it worth it?

This we-feel-sorry-for-ourselves gloom has not settled on the office all of a sudden. We read quite a while ago a summary in the *Publishers' Weekly*, in which various magazines, three of them with circulations comparable to AMERICA'S, were given

credit for having influenced varying percentages of people to buy books they had reviewed. So, we asked ourselves, people do buy books on the strength of reviews? Do the readers of AMERICA?

And while we were floundering around in that damp doubt, came a blast that mired us deeper still. Says Mr. Cerf of *Random House*, anent book-reviewers: "With a few rare exceptions they have about as much influence on the book-buying public as they have on the weather." Mr. Cerf is a publisher, and ought to know.

Then we turned to read some reviews, hoping to find in some of these gems-in-brief a little balm in Gilead. We hoped to prove to our own satisfaction, at least, that the maligned oracles should, if they actually did not, influence the buyers of books.

But there was no balm in Gilead. Instead there was tripe. For the first thing that we read was Raymond Holden's review, in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, of Franz Werfel's *Embezzled Heaven*. Says Raymond: "Teta . . . finds . . . in death a passport to further search, search for that which everyone seeks—the root of the Permanent." Well, well, let's have more of this, to clarify the gentleman's meaning. Teta, we hear, is "doomed to walk the earth in the guise of all simple people, looking for the Permanent, the vestiges and symbols and rumors of which man has gathered together into what he calls God." And finally: ". . . the greatest dignity of which the Permanent can boast is that it is the product and not the patron of human life."

Come, come, Mr. Holden, have out with it, one way or another. If the Permanent (we do prefer the good solid word, God, that hits with an impact) has left vestiges, which man has discovered, then the Permanent (God) who left the footprints (*vestigium* means just that), must have gone before the discoverer, man; if He goes before, precedes, He cannot be the product of. When good R. Crusoe saw the startling footprints in the sand, he did not say: "Ha, ha! I see that my subconscious impulses have so externalized my wish-thinking that the results are these vestigial traces on the littoral. These I shall consider as being made by some quasi-person, whom I shall call Friday."

Certainly, if there were many reviews like that, they would not deserve to influence book-buyers. Maybe there are too many.

But there is where a little light broke in on our despondent gloom. In the columns of AMERICA you will at least not get that sort of stuff. However profound or brilliant or keen the judgments on books may or may not be, they will certainly not be foolish with the foolishness and foolhardiness of those who dismiss God and all the tremendous and terrible implications that He means, with a flighty wave at the "Permanent."

Maybe, then, the reviews in AMERICA should influence friends and win admirers. But we are still puzzled by the first poser—do they? If, when you go to buy a book (even though you have one already), you mention to the man behind the counter that so-and-so's review in AMERICA has brought you to this crisis, the word may get back to us, and cheer us up no end.

BOOKS

PRIDE AND PERSECUTION IN A SILKEN SCABBARD

SAPPHIRA AND THE SLAVE GIRL. By Willa Cather.
Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50

WE often smile at the Oriental's dread of "losing face," and forget that we make a virtue of keeping up a front. Many of the charming phases of life a century ago, and especially of Southern life, sprang from this gallant pretense, and whatever their merit before a higher Court, these high-spirited attitudinizations did produce (or manifest) a noble breed.

This novel deals with such a life—it might well be called a study in pride of place. Sapphira Colbert had stepped down a bit from the elite society of pre-Civil War Winchester in marrying the miller Henry Colbert, but in the rural community of Back Creek, in her fine house, surrounded by her slaves, she was determined to keep up the graciousness and serenity of Southern life, even though it meant a subtle persecution of an attractive mulatto girl, hitherto her favorite. The callous treatment was not dictated by cruelty, though it was cruel. Sapphira was, in many respects, a kind woman. She visited and encouraged the sick slaves, she saw to their jollity on festive occasions, she was just in managing them. But she was above all a proud woman—proud of her ability to be equable in her prolonged sickness, to be the serene mistress of her home, proud of her place.

And this leads her to plan, or at least acquiesce in, the undoing of Nancy, the slave girl, at the hands of Martin Colbert, the nephew of unsavory reputation. For she thought that her husband was bemoaning himself by his treatment of Nancy, not precisely through any immorality (though she had suspected it), but through an attitude of affectionate familiarity unbecoming between master and slave. Nancy is saved through the assistance of Mr. Colbert and Mrs. Blake, his widowed daughter, and sent by underground railroad to Canada, where she prospers.

Miss Cather's story is peculiar. It is a very slight thing at first touch, but it grows upon you. There is great economy in the description of the characters, and the simplicity and directness of the style are engaging. And perhaps the fact that, although it deals with slaves, it is not a "sociological" novel, lends it its greatest attractiveness. The slaves are not a problem to be equated, but people to be seen and (for the most part) loved.

I cannot feel that Miss Cather here reaches the height of some of her former work, but it is a well told, unusual tale, keen and deft in its reconstruction of the past that was proud and well mannered, but by no means selfless and humble. There was a deal of bleakness under Sapphira's gallant front, even in the final *beau geste* of her proud, lonely death. The distressed, lowly determination of the slave girl to save her soul is warmer and more human than the efforts of the mistress to save face and uphold her pride of place. DONALD G. GWYNN

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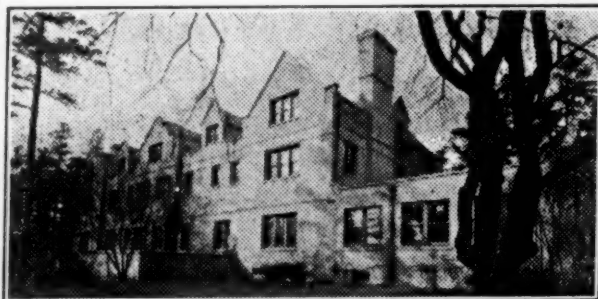
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what it has to say to us on the special needs of our moment, a moment of moral breakdown and the crushing of individual personality by great collective masses." This is an accurate summation by the publishers, but it lacks the added enthusiastic approval that the book richly deserves.

The author writes with a mystic touch, developing on a philosophical and theological plane general discussions on Love and Mysticism, Suffering and Silence, and then points out how these are found in Mary's interior life. The tone is now mystical and distant, now pointed and devotionally warm in its love for Our Lady; the author sees in her character and her life the familiar virtues, but he turns the lessons about and analyses them anew and more deeply for our modern mind. Do married people meet with difficulties in married life? With them he discusses the trials of our Lady's love when Joseph found she was with child; he discusses love in marriage, the difficulties of the flesh, the glory of virginity. "Christian husbands and wives whose love must at times pass through periods of anguished darkness not unlike the Dark Nights of the mystical union, must not forget that the marriage of the Virgin was begun under the sign of sorrow."

There is another magnificent chapter on Love. God formed us out of His love, made love the central and positive driving force of our being. His Commandments, then, are not negative burdens, but guides to keep our love directed to the higher and better things. "God's Commandments have no other object than to introduce into the diversity of action the spirit of poverty. . . . They seek to keep us from being immersed in external activity, from being imprisoned in the partial, from desiring less than the infinite. That is why Jesus can sum them all up in the one commandment: 'Thou shalt love.' Hence man sees the respect that he ought to show to this mystery of love within him; he recognizes his true nature, the greatness of his soul, and the Person Who can fill it.

The book has been carried over into English very well, in spite of the difficulties of the mystic tone; and its value has been increased by the addition of five beautiful Madonna illustrations. It is strongly recommended to all as thoughtful and interesting reading.

FRANCIS X. MCCARTHY

DECILDING GLORIANA'S LILY-LEGEND

QUEEN ELIZABETH. By Theodore Maynard. The Bruce Publishing Co. \$4

IN many respects, Queen Elizabeth must be regarded as the greatest of English queens. Moreover, she has the distinction that few characters in history have evoked such contradictory estimates as she has, for, while some of her biographers picture her as a paragon of greatness and excellence, others present her as a monster all but devoid of saving graces. She is still largely an enigma; in the story of her life much is obscure, much is controversial.

By way of preparation for an appraisal of Elizabeth's character and career, Maynard devotes considerable space to an inquiry into her heritage. From her grandfather, Henry VII, she inherited a spirit of parsimony little short of miserliness; from her father she inherited musical talent, genuine literary ability, a quick temper and imperious ways; from her mother, Ann Boleyn, vanity; from both of her parents a fondness for dissimulation and vulgarity, and resort to cruelty when influenced by fear. Moreover, she learned profanity from Thomas Seymour to whose care she was entrusted when in her middle teens; and by degrees she cultivated bad manners and an insatiable appetite for flattery. Due allowance is made for the effect on her character of an exceptionally unhappy childhood and youth, when an unnatural father denied her the affection her young heart craved, and when she was surrounded by dis-

belief, duplicity and intrigue, without a friend except her half-sister Mary, and always in danger.

These conditions and early influences are said to have left a permanent scar on her soul and to have "shrivelled it up." Later, her instincts as a woman were thwarted, and in her last days she lacked true friends and was unable to draw any comfort or support from religion. Small wonder that her death was "one of the most dreadful in history." And yet she cannot be absolved from responsibility for the reason that the main blot upon her fame is that "she, a latitudinarian in religion, if not an actual atheist, should have persecuted members of a Church to which she had once readily conformed, and to which she was prepared, if occasion demanded it, to conform again."

Maynard's judgments of men and events in Elizabeth's reign are not without interest. The "Casket Letters" he holds to be forgeries; Mary Stuart's trial he regards as the most "monstrous miscarriage of justice in all secular history," and he denies that any English court enjoyed jurisdiction over her. Whatever her faults and misdeeds, he declares that never was there "a more valiant or a more Catholic end" because she "accepted the ruin of her pride and ambition rather than renounce her faith." Cecil is held up to well deserved reprobation by a quotation of Macaulay's scathing appraisal. Drake and his fellows are "no better than vulgar and commonplace thieves, adorned with a few eccentricities," who shed no luster on their country. English activities in Ireland, now and later, are characterized as the "darkest blot upon England's record," a "record of cruelty and treachery that no Englishman can look back upon except with shame."

This book is a popular biography with most of the excellences and some of the defects of that type of literature. There are no dull pages, for it is excellently written, and a sense of humor, perhaps a trifle virile at times, permeates the work. A thoughtful reader, however, would often like to know what documentary evidence is the basis for various judgments of men and events. Some statements are too sweeping; others are open to questioning. The surmise as to the reason why Henry VIII married Katharine Parr is truly fanciful and founded on no evidence. Such rash words only make the reader hesitant about accepting any of Maynard's judgments at face value. Finally, vigorous exception must be taken to the passage where the author seems ready to condone political assassination in certain circumstances.

The conclusion reached by the author after nearly four hundred pages of study and analysis of Elizabeth's career is: "Her legend is heroic; her true history is not."

CHARLES H. METZGER

I CHOSE DENMARK. By Francis Hackett. Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$2.50

"IN Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth* one sees the locusts come. In Bromfield's novel one sees the rains come." In April, 1940, the Nazis came to Denmark. "By contrast locusts are harmless and deluge a joke," says Mr. Hackett. The Danish way of life, as he knew it from 1919 to 1940, was essentially democratic; the folk high schools gave the people the education that enabled them to set up a cooperative economy which made possible a good standard of living. The Danes did not weep over their lack of coal and oil, but working together and using the materials at hand, they set up social services which cared for the old, the infirm, the insane; they destroyed their greatest military fort and made of it a playground for children and a place of beauty and rest for adults; they developed a civilization in which men lived in peace and comfort and freedom.

The description of this civilization and its people is interesting, but the first half of the book is somewhat marred by a saltatory style that I find very annoying. Surely one who writes such beautiful prose as Mr. Hackett does when he describes his reactions to Caruso's singing, the beauty and peace of a Christmas Day in

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Sweden, the majesty of Norway's mountains, can manage transitions gracefully whenever he will.

Catholic readers will second Mr. Hackett's approval of the social progress which eliminates poverty without destroying self-respect, but they will not agree that what he calls the liberal approach to divorce and to abortion can properly be called "soul-planning." As to his many gibes at Ireland and at the Catholic Church, perhaps they are explained by the facts that two of his books were banned in Ireland for being "obscene and indecent," and he has repudiated the Church into which he was born.

MARY L. DUNN

RACE: SCIENCE AND POLITICS. By Ruth Benedict. Modern Age Books. \$2.50

IN her latest book Dr. Benedict effectively exposes the illusion that there is any scientific basis, anthropological or hereditary, for the Nazi religion of race. The early chapters establish quite satisfactorily the absence of any such thing as "pure race" today, particularly in central Europe. The following chapters present in broad outline the author's analysis of the causes of political and religious struggles through the centuries. One misses here the scientific approach which gave strength and point to the early chapters.

It is disappointing to find a modern book advocating, as a cure for the threat of racism, a program of economic planning alone. For one must now concede that the nations of Europe in their struggle for "freedom of conscience" removed themselves from the protection of that authoritative voice which defined for them and still defines for men and nations their Divinely appointed obligations and destiny. Individuals and nations began by picking and choosing among the laws of God, and ended by abandoning them altogether for the new materialistic philosophies which have sired a brood of isms of which one is called racism.

GEORGE S. MAHAN

A GLANCE AT THE EDITOR'S BOOK CASE

FROM Thucydides to our own Dorothy Thompson is a long stretch. But over these centuries Albert R. Chandler has selected and annotated twenty sources in *The Clash of Political Ideals* (Appleton-Century. \$2.50). The selections are from writings for and against democracy. The Sermon on the Mount and *Quadragesimo Anno* of Pius XI find a place in the selection; nor are Karl Marx and Lenin left out in the cold.

Stewart Edward White in *The Unobstructed Universe* (Dutton. \$2.50) has forsaken the certainty of the great open spaces for the dubiousity of psychical research. His purpose, so it seems, is to outline the fundamental concepts of a philosophy which essays to answer the problems of these days of world anguish. As to which, you have to take the author's word.

Walter B. Pitkin has done it again, this time with *Escape From Fear* (Doubleday, Doran. \$2). And this escape, from a provisioned Fascist combine, seems to call for something much like the comfortable conditions of life in a slave state—Soviet Russia, shall we say! Pitkin was all very well when he stuck to facts and forthrightness. But this prophetic escape sounds too much like that of the poor fish, when it escaped from the frying-pan into the fire.

Eye Witness, edited by Robert Spiers Benjamin (Alliance Book Corporation. \$2.75), is a sort of symposium by twenty-three members of the Overseas Press Club of America. These experiences range around the globe, but mostly in Europe and Asia. Some are weird, some tragic, and some humorous. And most of them are good journalism, though you need not agree with the writers on all points.

Tabloid biography is apparently the idea of *Living Biographies of Famous Rulers* by Henry Thomas and

Dana Lee Thomas (Garden City Publishing Co. \$1.98). The biographed, however, are not living. Rather the idea seems to get a worm's-eye view of the part played in world history by famous rulers. Anyway, it was the Roman Pontiff, and not the Emperor Constantine, who gave the decision on the dogma of the Holy Trinity at the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea.

Earl Schenck in *Come Unto These Yellow Sands* (Bobbs-Merrill. \$3.50) tells chattily of his adventures in the South Sea islands. There is a great deal of artistry in his descriptions, and he seems to have delved into the intimate life of the Polynesians, whose liberalism in the matter of sex is not particularly interesting.

Dutch Interior is by Frank O'Connor (Knopf. \$2.50), a dampish sort of novel about Ireland. The plot is anemic, and the characters are of an Irish sort that never existed outside the fantasies of fiction. The real Irish will not appreciate this kind of portrayal.

Irish of another sort is *Such is the Kingdom* by Thomas Sugrue (Holt. \$2.50). These Irish, however, belong in a Connecticut town, and the time is the first decade of the twentieth century. The characters are Catholic, but some of them seem to have stepped off the sidewalk.

Let the Earth Speak by Ann Steward (Macmillan. \$2.50) is a well written tale about a sound subject. It is the story of a city family that started out to pick up life again on a Kentucky farm. Country life is portrayed with the skill of a pastoral poet, showing the happiness of living on the land.

Kathleen Norris goes somewhat for the mystery story in *The Secret of the Marshbanks* (Doubleday, Doran. \$2). There is a murder, the clearing up of which is not altogether clear. But Mrs. Norris has not fallen down on her presentation of an interesting and colorful story, nor is the religious atmosphere left out.

They Come and They Go by Venetia Savile (Morrow. \$2.50) finds its local coloring in a sanatorium in the Bavarian Alps. The tale is well told, even though the characters are wholly engaged in thinking about their health. Take it at that, with the assurance that the author has a distinctive flair for writing, with no waste of words.

"S.M.C." is evidently a smoke screen for some anonymity. But *The Spark in the Reeds* (Kenedy. \$2) is a story which tells of a priest's struggle against a countryside that disliked him and all that he represented. Rebuffed at every point, the work of the priest-hero seems a failure, until the end. A simple tale told with no emotional trimmings.

In *Troubadour of the Stars* (Piest. \$2.50) Olaf Saile makes up an historical novel about the astronomer, Johannes Kepler. The story is scrupulous and meticulous as far as the life of Kepler goes; but somehow fact seems to have strangled fancy, and a spice of romance might have brightened up the narrative.

A wearisome story of domestic life in the 1880's is unfolded by Elizabeth Corbett in *Mr. and Mrs. Meigs* (Appleton-Century. \$2). That was the zenith of the Victorian age, if you can remember back that far, and the Meigs's are monotonous, even if they did stand well with the local bank manager.

Cecile Hulse Matschat's *Preacher on Horseback* (Farar and Rinehart. \$2.75) revolves around the frontier, and people of the frontier enter considerably into the tale. The preacher took his young bride from a comfortable life in New York to the Mohawk Valley shortly after the Civil War, and later on into Michigan. The picturization is good, even if the preacher is mostly feeble.

Trumpet in the Wilderness by Robert S. Harper (Mill. \$2.50) takes you back to shortly before the War of 1812. Thrills, horrors, and many another emotional stimulus go into the making of the tale. But the young chap who lost his girl and eventually found another girl, is not altogether exciting; and the other folks who wander around in the story are as vivacious as tabby cats.

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THEATRE

THE CORN IS GREEN. It was a pleasure to burst into a song of praise over the acting of Helen Hayes and Maurice Evans in *Twelfth Night*. It is an even greater pleasure to exult over the triumph of Ethel Barrymore in her new play, *The Corn Is Green*, written by Emlyn Williams and produced and directed by Herman Shumlin at the National Theatre, with settings by Howard Bay and costumes by Ernest Schrappe. Having got in all that, it is possible to get back at once to Miss Barrymore's triumph. It is so complete, and she so well deserves it!

For two years she had appeared in half-baked plays which not even she could carry to success. Before that she had in the Whiteoaks-Jalna offering a play that only she could have put over. It took all her strength, all her nervous force, all her ability to do it. Her acting of the part of the centenarian head of the Jalna clan was something that will be a tradition on our stage. But the play was an uneven offering, strong in spots, weak in other spots, especially those in which Miss Barrymore was not on the stage. Nevertheless, she put it over for two years, in New York and on the road; but no one realized its faults better than she did.

Now at last she has a wholly worthy play, admirably written, intensely dramatic. That is something to rejoice over. I saw her on the second night, after she had time to absorb all the praise the New York tributes were giving her. Her second-night performance, which is usually a let-down for stars, was even better than her first. She was energetic, dynamic, incomparable. In short, she was Ethel Barrymore at her best, and no stage in the world today offers us anything better.

A synopsis of *The Corn Is Green* gives little idea of its force, its power, its increasing tension. In it Miss Barrymore is a middle-aged spinster school teacher in a Welsh mining town. Her hope when she begins there is to bring some glimmer of knowledge and education to the young Welsh miners, toiling almost unceasingly underground and passing in town saloons the few hours they might have in the open.

But among these she finds a genius, and knows him for what he is. He is incredibly unkempt and uncouth; but under his tangled mat of dirty hair there is an extraordinary brain. In two years of toil and sweat she prepares him for Oxford, and gets him there. He is by turns fascinated by his opportunity and doubtful of it. He loses interest in his work, resumes his drinking, seduces a young girl—(or rather is seduced by her). The school mistress never loses patience nor her conviction that here is a brain the world needs. She gives it to the world—and in that achievement, she feels, she justifies her own existence.

In addition to Miss Barrymore's acting, there are two more rôles that the players make stand out with almost painful brilliance. Richard Waring as the hero is doing the best stage work of his life; and Thelma Schnee, a newcomer to me at least, interprets the rôle of a very youthful vampire with a cool, quiet devilishness that is one of the most effective performances on our stage this season. She will be a star a few years from now.

Rosalind Ivan is a new and striking type of housekeeper—perfectly acted; Rhys Williams as a tongue-tied clerk gives an equally impressive performance; Edmond Breon shows us a cerebral type of Welsh squire; and Mildred Dunnock, as a sentimental but hard-working spinster assistant to the teacher, could not be better. Indeed the company as a whole is as perfect as Mr. Shumlin could bring together.

The Corn Is Green will be here for a long time, but see it at once. It and *Twelfth Night* have brought this theatrical season to life—and to rich, full life—at last.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

FILMS

LADY WITH THE RED HAIR. An authorized biography is a kind of literary diet in which the reader gets only what is thought good for him, and films made from such efforts are not guaranteed to provide dramatic portraits. This adaptation from the memoirs of Mrs. Leslie Carter, the Belasco star of the mauve decade, is interesting, nostalgic entertainment, but the central character is too determinedly noble to avoid suspicion of being a sentimental reconstruction. Even the direction bears down on the pathetic, allowing scope only for Mrs. Carter's temper among human failings. The society woman, having lost her child in divorce proceedings, turns to the stage for the fortune necessary to reopen the suit. David Belasco is harried into opening the stage door to her, but her triumphs are empty when she finds her son turned against her. After an estrangement arising from her remarriage, she returns to the Belasco management to continue her successful career. There are enough ups and downs in the action to counterfeit a plot, and the enlivened playing of Miriam Hopkins does much to relieve the impression of a memoir in motion. Claude Rains gives his usual clear-cut performance and Richard Ainley is effective in support. Adults with sympathetic memories will find this *satisfactory*, but the casual moviegoer may object to its slow pace and sentimental flourishes. (Warner)

DR. KILDARE'S CRISIS. The chief credit of this series has been that it made the hospital an interesting and human institution, cluttered with ordinarily serious problems but lightened by enough humor to offset the clinical atmosphere. But in this instance, the subject matter is altogether too grim for comfort. Harold Bucquet's direction in the last episode suggested the lecture-room approach, and in this he has arrived at a detailed discussion of the hereditary nature of epilepsy. To say that his accent on symptoms is not productive of carefree amusement is an understatement. Dr. Kildare is about to marry his favorite nurse when her brother appears and is suspected of suffering from epilepsy. The nurse immediately halts the wedding plans until shrewd Dr. Gillespie hints that a disregarded head injury could explain the symptoms. Lew Ayres, Lionel Barrymore, Laraine Day and Robert Young continue the tradition of excellent performances, but the humorous touches are not strong enough to make this a happy addition to the series. For those *adults* who like their problems clinical, it will do very well. (MGM)

SON OF MONTE CRISTO. Costume melodramatics are not usually more credible than the plainer variety, but they have a quality of remoteness which makes them less liable to critical attack. However, a topical touch insinuates itself into this tale of a buffer state between Czarist Russia and Bismarck's Germany which finds itself under the domination of a dictator. The son of the famous Monte Cristo comes to the aid of the harassed Grand Duchess and the strong man's career ends in a flurry of rapiers. Rowland Lee stresses the romantic angles, and Joan Bennett, Louis Hayward and George Sanders play with broad interpretation. This is a diverting but *frankly unimportant* production. (United Artists)

CHARTER PILOT. This is a lively item of minor entertainment, combining melodramatic impact with a brand of comedy in keeping with the energetic plot. Eugene Forde makes exciting business of the rivalry between two airlines in Honduras, with Lloyd Nolan encountering added but pleasanter difficulties from Lynn Bari as a radio author. Arleen Whelan and Hobart Cavanaugh are helpful in an *adult thriller*. (Twentieth Century-Fox)

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EVENTS

EFFORTS to get in and get out featured the week. . . . That getting into jail in a search for happiness is not such a simple affair was once more indicated. . . . Strolling into police headquarters of a North Carolina city, a young woman inquired: "What is it you call someone who's been married twice without getting a divorce?" "A bigamist," replied the well-informed police chief. "Well, that's what I am, and I'm tired of both of them. I want you to put me in jail. I'll be happier there." The chief, asserting that the city could not afford to feed her in jail, pitilessly rejected her plea for incarceration. . . . The difficulty of getting into the military forces was also glimpsed. An El Paso attorney offered to enlist in the army if he could start as a general, but was refused. . . . A Missouri Congressman, arriving at the hall where he was to lecture, found the crowd so great he could not enter. He had to hire a ladder, climb through a second-floor window, get in the hard way. . . . Getting out seemed as arduous as getting in. . . . A Midwest professor, moved by his family's complaints that frigid drafts were descending from the attic, went up with hammer and nails, boarded in not only the drafts but himself as well. After vainly trying to get out, he pounded, clamored for aid. His two daughters, aided by a boy friend, finally succeeded in unsealing the drafts and the professor. . . . An improved method of stealing small change from moving-picture cashiers was made public. . . . In Albany two small boys introduced four mice into the female cashier's cage, grabbed for the money while the cashier was screaming. The boys were later apprehended, demonstrating that crime does not pay.

Life's Contrasts. . . . New York City newspapers, day after day, used copious space, numerous photographs in publicizing the story of the fight for a dog's life. Brownie, a cocker spaniel, according to the New York Health Department, bit a bill collector, a gas-company inspector, a newspaper delivery man, and was condemned to death as a three-bite dog. The publicity in the papers provoked an emotional storm which swept ten States. Letters poured in to the canine's young owner. "I hope he won't die. I know Brownie didn't mean it. He looks too kind. I have a little dog named Tippy," said one epistle. "Put a muzzle on him and write to our good President. He is the one man today to help you," advised another communication. Money to defray legal expenses poured in. At length, a judge gave the animal back temporarily to its mistress, ruling that Brownie "pawed but did not bite" the gas-company man, "scratched and nipped in friendly fashion" the newspaper delivery gentleman and "jumped at but did not bite" the bill collector. . . . At the very time all this furore was erupting over the welfare of a dog, a destitute, friendless man, after seeking a job in vain, sat down in his dingy room, penned a note of farewell to the world: "A \$15 a week job could have saved me. I was successful once. I lost my job and have been unemployed for the last three years—lost all my money. Relief and charity are impossible and I prefer death. Death is a blessing for the hopeless ones, even at the end of a rope on a cold winter's night." He walked over to Central Park, threw a rope over a tree and hanged himself. . . . The next morning, a policeman, who had just read about the widespread sympathy for the dog, cut down the dead body of the man. . . . Death at the end of a rope is not a blessing, even for the hopeless ones. With Christ present in so many nearby Tabernacles, the hopeless ones can have hope and strength for the asking. . . . Granting all this, one cannot help being dumbfounded at a social setup in which the plight of a dog stirs thousands of well-wishers and the plight of a man stirs nobody.

THE PARADER